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# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN

GENERAL SURVEY

BY  
G. LA PIANA  
1915







THE ITALIANS  
IN MILWAUKEE  
WISCONSIN

GENERAL SURVEY

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE  
ASSOCIATED CHARITIES

BY  
G. LA PIANA

1915



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## I.

# THE ITALIAN COLONY IN MILWAUKEE

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## I.

### THE ITALIAN POPULATION

ACCORDING to the last U. S. census for the year 1910, the Italian population of Milwaukee numbered at that time 4,685, of which 3,554 were born in Italy and 1,131 were born in America. The increase of the colony has been constant in these last five years, therefore, including the large floating element of single men, the present population of the colony can be estimated at about 9,000.

The majority of the Italians live in the Third Ward, in the district enclosed by Michigan Street, Broadway, the river and the lake. Most of them originally came from Sicily. Some of them (nearly all Sicilians), have recently moved northward, to the point where Milwaukee, Jefferson, Jackson and Van Buren Streets open into North Water Street, bordering the river. Another little settlement is on the South Side, in Bay View, composed principally of Italians from Central and Southern Italy. Many others are scattered through the city, and most of them are from Tuscany or from other northern provinces of the Italian Kingdom. The first of the settlement came over about twenty years ago, the nucleus being a group of Sicilians from the province of Palermo, who came here from the colony of Chicago, and settled among the Irish in the Third Ward. Little by little the Italians took the place of the Irish who left this part of the district, which is now almost entirely Italian.

Among the Sicilians there are three distinct groups; the first, which is oldest and largest, is formed by natives of the Province of Palermo, the greater part from the villages and

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towns scattered along the coast from Palermo to Termini, as Porticello, Santa Flavia, Sant'Elia, Aspra, Bagheria and so on.

A second group comparatively large, comes from the Province of Messina, especially from the towns and villages along the coast from Tusa to Milazzo; as Santo Stefano di Camastra, Sant'Agata di Militello, Naso, Capo d'Orlando, and Milazzo.

A third group is composed of natives from the Province of Trapani and from the little island of Marettimo. There are a few from the Province of Girgenti, and a very small number from the Province of Siracusa.

The Italians from the provinces of Southern and Central Italy, came chiefly from the Puglie (Provinces of Bari, Foggia) Abbruzzi, (Prov. Chieti and Aquila), and Campania (Prov. Naples, Salerno and Avelline). The group of Tuscans came almost entirely from the country between Florence and Pisa. According to their places of origin, the Italian population of Milwaukee would be divided as follows:

Sicilians—65 per cent.

From South Italy—20 per cent.

From Central and North Italy—15 per cent.

## II.

### OCCUPATIONS AND SALARIES

THE majority of Italians of Milwaukee worked in the fields in Italy, either on their own land or that which they rented, and some worked out by the day. Those who came from the villages and towns on the seacoast of Sicily, were used to work in fruit gardens or vineyards, and many of them were expert pruners, cultivators of fruit trees, or excellent horticulturists. Others who came from districts of the interior of Sicily, or from the provinces of South Italy, were ordinarily trained to the cultivation of grain and various cereals. They had a knowledge of sheep raising and were skilled in the care of animals, also were good horticulturists. A great number of those coming from the towns of Sicily were fishermen, owning a small boat or working as help in another boat, or finally renting a boat from an owner who ordinarily had several. They were paid by the day, regardless of profit. Still others bought fish from the fishermen and sold it in the markets at Palermo, Messina or neighboring districts.

A considerable number of people coming from every town and province, and almost all from Tuscany and North Italy, were in their own country tradesmen, as butchers, bakers, barbers, tailors, masons, shoemakers, carpenters and drivers. A very small percentage were professional men and the remnants, about 10 per cent of the total, were without a definite occupation.

Therefore the general affirmation that the majority of the Italian immigrants in Milwaukee were without a definite occupation in Italy, is untrue. The truth is that arriving in America, many in hopes of improving their condition, or because work along their line is difficult to find, accept the first work that comes their way, and are generally reduced to laboring with shovel and pick in the streets or on the railroad.

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Almost all of those who were farmers or farmworkers in Italy, become common laborers in America and are forced to do the hardest work in the foundries, coal yards, docks, tracks and so on. Also many who had trades, as shoemakers, masons, and tailors, are reduced to the same conditions; because of ignorance of the English language, because of the difficulty of belonging to the Unions, and finally because of the difference in American methods and machinery, they must begin anew their education and meantime they work wherever they can, to earn their bread. Therefore, in the Italian colony in Milwaukee, we find almost 75 per cent of socalled "common laborers," and only 15 per cent are in trades or professions, while the remaining 10 per cent is formed by those engaged as saloon keepers, grocers, or collectors of garbage, etc. The comparison between the occupations of the same people first in Italy and now in America, is very interesting, and therefore we will consider them in the following table:

Occupations:	In Italy	In America
Farmers or farmworkers, . . . .	50. per cent	5. per cent
Fishermen or fishtradenen, . . . .	25. "	0.05 "
Various trades (shoemakers, masons, etc.),	20. "	10. "
Saloonkeepers, grocers, etc., . . . .	0.50 "	10. "
Professional men, . . . .	0.02 "	0.02 "
Without definite occupation, . . . .	4.48 "	74.93 "
	100.	100.

Many of these men without a definite occupation work in foundries or steel works, especially with the Allis-Chalmers Co., Falk Manufacturing Co., The Rolling Mills of Bay View; some in tanneries, especially with the Pfister & Vogel Co., and others with the electric car lines and Gas Light Company of the city. Many work for contractors in repairing and maintaining public roads, and a greater number on the railroads or in the coal docks; few do special work in factories, and a small number are employed in restaurants and hotels.

The wages of all these workers amount to a maximum of \$2.00 and a minimum of \$1.50 per day; the maximum earned

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by laborers in foundries and tanneries, who ordinarily do piece work, and the minimum by those who labor on the streets or railroads. Some who are employed by the city to collect garbage, are paid \$3.00 a day, which includes the maintenance of a horse and a wagon.

On this basis an Italian laborer would earn an average of \$600 a year; but the Italian laborer rarely works all the year; he may calculate on not more than nine months of work under the most favorable circumstances, and only four or five months in hard times, therefore, the average earning of this class of laborers is from \$300 to \$400 a year. The fact that Italian laborers do not work all the year is not an Italian peculiarity; it is not a habit or an effect of laziness as is generally believed in America. Laborers worked steadily all the year in Italy, and they will do the same in America when they find work to be done. But they do not find steady work for many reasons, principally because of the kind of work they do. Italian farmers, who do not go to work in the country, look for work in the big industrial cities like Milwaukee. With the approach of the winter the demand ceases in certain branches of industry and the number of laborers is reduced. Work in the streets and on railroads is stopped almost entirely and the first to be sacrificed are the Italians. In the same way when work begins again, they are the last to benefit by it. Besides this class of workmen, which forms the bulk of the Italian colony, there is the numerous class of other Italians, who as tradesmen or professionals deal with those in the colony. These people are generally in better condition than the laborers, sometimes even prosperous, but now there are more tradesmen than the colony requires, and even groceries and saloons do not give remarkable profits to their owners.

There are in Milwaukee 45 groceries owned by Italians, and 38 of them crowded into three or four streets of the Third Ward. Many of them have one small, unsanitary room with a few boxes of macaroni and a quantity of cans of tomatoes, which form all their stock, besides oranges or bananas displayed in the window. Generally women attend to the light business,

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while their husbands are at work on the tracks or in the foundries. Only three or four groceries have a large stock, and do a good amount of business, but the system of giving large credit to their customers, especially during periods of idleness, makes development of their trade on a large scale impossible. Better conditions we find among saloonkeepers, who give no credit.

bons In the Third Ward there are 29 Italian saloons, 12 of which are in 4 blocks on Huron Street, and 14 are in the other wards of the city. People engaged in other business are less numerous, although almost every line is represented. Italian bakeries, meat markets, shoe repairing shops, barber shops, are operated among the Italians in the Third Ward. Very few Italians are in business out of the colony. The only line in which the Italian is well represented is the wholesale fruit commission houses.

### III.

#### WOMAN AND CHILD LABOR

WITH regard to this question, the conditions of the Italian colony of Milwaukee are far better than those of many other Italian colonies in the United States.

The greater part of the Italian women of the colony attend to household duties in the home, and do not go to factories. This is also in accord with the customs of Italian families.

A certain number take outside work into the home, generally sewing and hand embroidering for factories, but, either because the work is scarce, or because it is poorly remunerated, the number of women who work in this manner is very limited. Of the 149 cases investigated, in only five families were there women who thus contributed to the family funds, and of these women the most highly paid, a woman who did beautiful hand embroidery, received only \$5.00 per week, and the most poorly paid was a mother with two daughters, who, for mending sacks at 2 cents each, could not make more than \$3.00 per week. If work were more steady and better paid, a larger number of Italian women might devote more hours per day to sewing and embroidering, and so assist the family, especially when the husband is out of work.

In the larger cities of Italy there are to be found clubs of wealthy women, whose sole object is to find work of this kind for able and needy women, with great advantage to the person who orders the work and the one who executes it, because, by eliminating the middleman, on one hand the buyer pays lower prices than those in the shops, and these women workers receive a greater compensation than that which would be paid by the merchant. One organization of such a nature was started in Milwaukee, but was not successful.

Most of the widows who have no small children, and most of the girls who are over 15 years of age, work. The former generally do hard work at general cleaning; the latter, who for



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the most part have attended American schools, and have thereby become more or less Americanized, prefer working in tailor shops, dressmaking establishments, department stores, or factories. But here also the number is relatively limited, either because many Sicilian families do not wish to have their daughters work among strangers, exposed to danger, and prefer to keep them at home, or because, as a rule, Sicilian girls marry early and at the age of 16 or 17 have families of their own. In the factories the girls earn from \$4 to \$5 a week. There are very few Italian girls employed as servants in American homes, and these few are without parents in Milwaukee and are completely Americanized, so much so that they hardly speak Italian.

The law that compels children under 14 to attend school is religiously observed here in the Italian colony, and the Truancy Department and the Juvenile Protective Association have very little to do in the Italian colony with regard to this matter. The only work the Italian children do is selling newspapers after school hours, and odd jobs around the house.

The condition of the boys above 14 years of age is somewhat different. On quitting school they are sent to work. Although in Milwaukee there are no canneries as in the East, nor glass factories as in Pittsburgh and Sharpsburgh, which employ children to do horrible work, still here the boys work quite hard.

Fortunately many of the boys, unlike their fathers, speak English, and are apprenticed at some trade or specialize along some other line of work. The Italian lads prefer to work as tailors, barbers, and the more intelligent as mechanics in the different factories. Of course there are cases in which, either through parental neglect or extreme necessity, promising youths are forced to do manual labor in the streets, and so become common laborers, as their fathers. Just recently a lad of 14 was made to quit school before the close of the school year and sent to work on the railroad tracks as water boy. The boy is an orphan and the brother who has charge of him has a large family to support.

At the Continuation School, so useful to teach a trade to boys, up to now there have been no Italians, and the knowledge



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concerning the school is negligible in the colony. In the 149 families mentioned above, there were 52 boys or girls over 14 years of age not married, distributed among 33 families. Out of that number only 7 girls and 16 boys were working in factories or elsewhere. The others, mostly girls, remained at home with their mothers.

One of the most frequent occupations of Italian boys is to clean stables, the horses and wagons belonging to their fathers; some go out in the morning selling fruits and vegetables from house to house, others are employed as messenger boys either for private individuals or stores. The earnings of these children amount to \$1 and sometimes \$2 per week.

#### IV. HOUSING

THE Third Ward in its lower part is almost on a level with the river and the lake. Formerly it was marshland, and even today the subsoil is a watery mass solidified by a base of pile work. The district is near the harbor and borders the river and railway station, and is more adapted for business houses than for dwellings. In fact, day after day houses are disappearing to give way to big iron and concrete factories. In ten years this section will be a distinctly business district, and the Italians will be forced to move away. In the meantime the owners, anticipating this change, naturally have no desire to improve the houses, which are old, dilapidated and insanitary, but they demand a rent according to the location, wherein lies the value of the property.

That district should be given scientific attention by the municipal authorities. If the housing laws were lived up to and modified, the desired change would undoubtedly be hastened.

The stables are numerous, often adjoining the houses, and, especially in summer, breeding swarms of flies and insects. Four times as many people as should be permitted, are often crowded into a given space. Considering this, the fact is clear that the unhygienic condition of the district, populated almost exclusively by the Italians, is brought about not entirely through faults of their own. The streets being the center of the traffic, are muddy in winter and dusty in summer; here the children play. The air is heavy and unhealthy with vapors from the lake and river, smoke from chimneys and trains, gas from the tanks, odors and insects from the stables, and the crowding together of a population of workmen who often have no conveniences for cleanliness.

This may not excuse the lack of cleanliness, but explains it in a measure. The majority of these Italians come from rural

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districts of Sicily, where the conditions and climate permit them to live in the open air and sunshine, and then being transplanted into quite different conditions, they find difficulty in adapting themselves to the requirements of the life of a great industrial center. The mistake the Italians make is crowding together in this one district, where healthy conditions are impossible. However, the present statistics are not altogether discouraging. A diligent investigation of 149 Italian families which have appealed to the Associated Charities, and, of course, among the poorest of the colony, reveals the following:

87 houses found in good condition of cleanliness;  
 19 houses found in fair condition;  
 28 houses found in bad condition.

In 15 cases uncleanliness was temporary and visitors' work brought improvement, and only 13 are found to be habitually dirty and disorderly. The fact that 60 per cent are very clean and only 10 per cent habitually dirty, is a commendable record for the peasants of any nationality, especially so when constrained to live in the execrable conditions of the Third Ward. The rent that the Italians pay is exorbitant, considering the condition of the houses. For the above-mentioned 149 families we find the following figures:

Monthly Rent Less Than		From	More	Un-	Average
\$10.00:		\$10 to	than	known	
No. of		\$15	\$15		
Families,	71	51	14	3	\$12.00

For a laborer who earns from \$45 to \$50 per month in normal times, and is without work for three or four months every year, \$12 is an exorbitant rent. On a wage of \$400 a year under the most favorable circumstances \$144, a third of the whole, is a heavy rent, for a man who must support a large family and sometimes provide for old parents left in Italy. Therefore, to earn more, most of the Italians adopt the plan of keeping boarders.

## V.

### BOARDERS

IT is necessary to consider that in the rural districts of Sicily and Southern Italy, the custom of keeping boarders is unknown. Generally strangers are not admitted into the family circle; in exceptional cases hospitality is for a short period and many precautions are taken against slander. The fact of having boarders (which means other men in the house besides husband, father or brothers), is something new for the Italian women who come to America, just as it is a new experience for men to live under the same roof with women not of their family. This new arrangement has a strong influence on their daily life. Finding boarders is an easy matter, as a great part of the Italian emigration is formed of unmarried men, or those who have left wives and children in Italy, and therefore are boarding in other families. Considering the relative difference in size, Milwaukee probably has the same unhygienic, immoral, deplorable conditions resulting from overcrowding, as found in New York and Chicago. In the same 149 families we have found the following conditions:

Number of Boarders:	With 1 or 2 Boarders	With 3 or 4	With 5 or More	Without Boarders	Average of 149 Families
Number of Families:	33	20	7	89	40 per cent

This is an average of the families who for various reasons have appealed to the Associated Charities, who have small houses and are keeping boarders not as a business, but as a help towards paying the rent. The families with a great number of boarders are the most prosperous among laborers and never

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need assistance. Therefore, the percentage of Italian families who keep boarders is much more than 40 per cent.

The average rent is from \$2.50 to \$3.50 a month for a bed, two or three in a room, washing (one pair of drawers a week and a pair of sheets a month), light, heat and often the use of the kitchen. The food they provide themselves, cooking and eating it at home. There are some boarding houses in which they pay less, even \$1.50 a month, but the crowding together of the people under most unhygienic conditions, calls for a strict intervention of the health department.

The custom of three or four men joining together to rent and furnish a house, as frequently the Slavs do, does not exist among Italians in Milwaukee, nor should this plan be recommended, as sanitary conditions found in such cases are deplorable. From this point of view a boarding house with one responsible housekeeper is better, though it may have serious moral consequences.

The boarders may be divided into two classes:

- (1) Young and unmarried—
- (2) Mature age and married, but who have left wives and children in Italy.

In a house where there is a woman and girls of twelve years or more, boarders are always dangerous, but more so in the second class than in the first. The reason is evident. Young men generally adapt themselves more readily to American customs, learning English quickly, and becoming acquainted with girls of other nationalities, so find outside diversion. They rarely pay attention to the housekeeper, who is often not very attractive, because prematurely aged with hard work and too many children, but if there are marriageable daughters in the house, the situation changes, and a love affair often happens which generally culminates in a marriage. But with older and especially married men the situation has a different aspect; usually they never learn English, or only a few words for their work, and so never become acquainted with people of other

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nationalities. This forces them to seek the companionship of their own race, and naturally they turn to those within reach, the wife and daughters of the man who gives them lodging.

In Sicily it is dangerous and sometimes almost impossible for a stranger to become very intimate in any household, because jealousy and suspicion are so common among the Sicilians. But in American cities, the necessity of life in common, their restricted social pleasures and continual contact, make such intimacy comparatively easy for the boarder. Men accustomed to family life who have no outside diversion, find the temptation difficult to resist, and there is rarely a case of a boarder whose wife is still in Italy and who is living in a house with young women, that has not had serious consequences; families have been ruined and faithful wives in Italy have been abandoned.

Most of these facts remain buried in the secrecy of the family or perhaps known to only a few friends, in order to prevent scandal or acts of vengeance. In the Italian colony of Milwaukee the most noteworthy case of this kind is that of a boarder 35 years old, who had sexual relation with a girl thought to be twelve, who became a mother. It was taken to court, but the girl was found to be fourteen, and so they were married. The occurrences that tend toward the breaking up of families and the perversion of coming generations are many more numerous than one believes, and they should claim the attention of the associations which aim to raise the level of social and moral conditions among the Italians of the poorest classes, by readjusting their mode of living in America. From this point of view that of boarders is one of the most important and complicated problems.

## VI.

### FOOD AND HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES

**I**N normal times, the food of the Italian immigrants in Milwaukee is apparently better than that to which they were accustomed in their country. They have meat and potatoes more frequently, but less fruit, vegetables and cereals, which, with macaroni and wheat bread, form the ordinary diet in the rural districts of Sicily. Generally the families of workmen in Sicily have meat only on Sunday, but they use eggs largely, because almost every family in the villages has chickens. Fruit of every kind grows abundantly in Sicily and even arid mountains are cultivated by the industrious Sicilian countrymen, with large plantations of cactus, the fruit of which ripens in the early fall and is very delicious and nutritious. Fruit is cheap, especially in villages far from the cities, and in the country a bunch of ten big cactus fruit costs only a cent. Besides, almost every family owns a little piece of land on which fruit trees and greens are cultivated for family use. This simple diet, accompanied by life in the open air and the vigorous work in the fields, which is done almost entirely by hand, makes the Sicilian peasants healthy and strong.

In Milwaukee, instead of having fruit and greens, which are too expensive, they learn to substitute meat; but as this also is high, they use largely potatoes, which are more satisfying than nutritious. Macaroni, preferred to any other dish, costs too much when seasoned with tomatoes and oil, which are luxuries in Milwaukee for the laboring people, and they have to be educated to cheaper methods of preparation of this material food.

According to the diagram compiled by the Associated Charities of Buffalo, and adapted by the Milwaukee Associated Charities, a normal family of a wage-earner, consisting of mother, father and six children is not able to live in reasonably decent condition for less than \$71.33 a month, as in the following table:



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House Rent, . . . . .	\$ 9.50
Food, . . . . .	37.40
Heating, . . . . .	3.50
Household Expenses, . . . . .	3.13
Insurance, . . . . .	1.60
Car Fare, . . . . .	1.20
Clothing, . . . . .	15.00

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\$71.33

Italian families spend much less than that. According to the given table (Rent—Page 15), it would seem that they paid more than \$9.50 for average rent, but as we have observed, those families who pay more, keep boarders, which reduces the expense. In regard to heating, the Italians save something on the given figure. During hard times of no work, they collect a winter supply of wood from the old houses which are continually being torn down in the Third Ward. They make very little use of ordinary insurance, as almost all belong to the Italian Mutual Benefit Societies, paying fees from \$12 to \$15 a year. In the last year it has been found that American Insurance Companies have insured some Italians and their children.

Carfare is generally wanted, because of the distance to their work, which makes that unavoidable. The cost of clothes is also less than the figure given.

The food expenditure for a family of 8 persons, regardless of nationality, in the above list of the Milwaukee Charities, is divided as follows:

Man—Weekly Expense, . . . . .	\$1.75
Woman—Weekly Expense, . . . . .	1.38
Boy from 14 to 16, . . . . .	1.38
Girl from 14 to 16, . . . . .	1.21
Boy from 10 to 13, . . . . .	1.04
Boy from 6 to 8, . . . . .	.86
Boy from 2 to 5, . . . . .	.52
Nursing Child, . . . . .	.49

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\$8.63

weekly, and figuring a month as four weeks and two days, the total per month is \$37.40.



## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

The "Report of the Commissioner of Labor" of 1897, "The Italians in Chicago" gives important information and figures on the food of the Italians in that city. Inquiries were made in 782 families of 3,711 persons, and the estimated cost of food for family of same size of above in that city was \$7.45. (We must remember that since this report was made, prices have become much higher.)

The Report observed that the Italians in Chicago spent enough for food, but either from the selection or manner of preparation, they did not receive the nourishment necessary to keep them well and strong. For example, they preferred pork to beef, and often had greens in bad condition, that had been refused by the markets. They used very little milk and butter, but much fat, and they prepared eggs in such a way that they lost their nutritive value, and they spent too much for beer. "Reports were secured from 726 families as to the amount expended for beer per day. Of this number of families 533, or 73.42 per cent, reported that they used beer and that the average cost of beer per day per family was 11.1 cents. The average cost of milk per day per family was but 2.7 cents."

In the Italian colony of Milwaukee, limiting our inquiry to a hundred families of workmen who earn an average of \$1.80 a day, the evidence shows that a family of 8 persons, that is, father, mother and six children, from 13 years down, during normal times, spends not less than one dollar a day for food and drink.

The following is the list of expenses for food of one typical Italian laborer's family in Milwaukee of 8 persons:

Milk, weekly, . . .	\$0.77	Carried over, . . .	\$4.66
Bread, weekly, . . .	1.75	Potatoes, . . .	.25
Coffee, weekly, . . .	.20	Tomatoes, cheese, oil & lard, . . .	.50
Macaroni, weekly, . . .	.70	Greens and Fruit, . . .	.30
Sugar, weekly, . . .	.24	Eggs, . . .	.22
Meat, weekly, . . .	1.00	Others, . . .	.15
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$4.66		\$6.08
Drink—Beer—Average 15 cents every day, . . .			1.05
			<hr/>
Total Weekly Expenditure, . . .			\$7.13

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

This would make a daily average of \$1.02, to which must be added a reasonable rent of 35 cents a day, items for clothing, household utensils, etc., reaching a total expense of \$1.90 or \$2.00 daily. The supporter of that family is a garbage collector, who earns from \$3.00 to \$3.50 daily, of which about 75 cents daily is spent for the horse. But in many cases the average earning, as was said above, is no more than \$2.00 daily.

The 149 families on records of the Associated Charities gave the following figures:

Families with 1 or 2 children, . . . . .	41
Families with 3 or 4 children, . . . . .	65
Families with more than 5 children, . . . . .	38
Total number of children, 582; Average per family, 3.25 children each.	

For families of this size the daily expense for food is from 75 cents to 80 cents, and the total expenditure from \$1.15 to \$1.25. This explains how some families of workmen in Milwaukee, earning from \$45 to \$55 monthly, not only live, but save from \$10 to \$20, when there are debts to be paid that were contracted during the months of no work. In the last years the suffering has unfortunately been more constant because of the long months of no work and frequent sickness, generally caused by insufficient nourishment during these periods of idleness. It is impossible to give any figures on the feeding of families in these cases, because it depends upon the circumstances and it is generally reduced to an almost unbelievable minimum. It is impossible to give figures on the expenses for food of the single men who are boarded in families. Generally they spend only a few cents a day for eating, and their average of total expenditure may be considered from \$10 to \$15 monthly, including \$3.00 for lodging.

Food given by the County Poor Department of Milwaukee during the winter has been of great help to the poor Italian families, but some of the food is not palatable to them, especially to the families which came from South Italy. With the flour they make macaroni and bread, but as the flour is not a fine quality,

the bread is dark and sour, and is unwillingly eaten, especially by children. When they can afford it, the women mix in a little flour of better quality, making the bread softer. Oatmeal and cornmeal are also eaten unwillingly because they have not used these foods in their country. Visitors and housekeepers from institutions of social welfare, always have difficulty in persuading the mothers of Sicilian families to use such food for their children. In Sicily corn is scarcely cultivated. The soil is better adapted to wheat growing and generally people believe that corn contains no nourishment and is good only for poultry. It is hard to convince these mothers of the contrary, and children really do not like it, perhaps because it is not well prepared.

The use of corn is largely spread among the provinces of North and Central Italy. They make with corn flour a special dish called "polenta"—corn flour boiled in water and seasoned with olive oil or lard, and with different kinds of sauce or meat.

In Sicilian provinces, beer is an unknown drink among workmen. Instead they use the good strong wine of Sicilian vineyards, which is rather cheap and very abundant. In the same way, strong alcoholic liquors, as gin, rum, and so on, are completely unknown in Sicily. Such drinks are used by workmen of North Italy and especially in the big cities like Milan and Turin. That explains the fact that Sicilian workmen in Milwaukee do not use liquor and seldom get drunk. They drink enough beer with their meals as a substitute for the wine which they can not afford here. A bottle of wine is a luxury for special occasions like christening or other feasts.

A few Italians who become intoxicated can be found among saloonkeepers and among young people who have been accustomed from boyhood to American life and live almost entirely with workmen of other nationalities. In fact, among thousands of cases of drunkenness brought to the courts, there are very few Italians, as we will show better in the following chapter on "Delinquency."

Tea is also a drink to which the Sicilians are not accustomed, and it is almost useless to give it to them, as they do not care for it and prefer coffee, of which they are fond. In

hard times a little bread soaked in coffee makes the breakfast of the family, but in normal times more or less milk is added. Generally it is believed that Italian mothers furnish too little milk to their children. The said Report, "The Italians in Chicago," observes: "Milk is used in very small quantities. The question, do you give your children milk is usually answered in the affirmative by the Italian mother, but further inquiries bring out the information that she buys only about 3 cents worth per day and gives it to the children with coffee."

90 per cent of the poor families who call at the Associated Charities ask for milk for the children.

Families have their most important meal in the evening on returning from work. It consists of macaroni with tomatoes, or soup with vegetables, a little meat two or three times a week, potatoes, and from time to time greens cooked in various ways, preferably seasoned with olive oil, or raw with oil and vinegar. The use of peppers is general among the Italians of the Central Provinces, but rare among the Sicilians. The children soon become accustomed to the food of the family and drink beer at an early age. Eggs are rarely used by the poor families in Milwaukee, as the majority in Sicily kept their own chickens and had eggs exceptionally fresh. In Milwaukee the price is higher and rather than have them not fresh, they do not use them. The use of butter and cream is very rare and this may be the reason that the Sicilian women are considered deficient cooks by the Americans. This may be true in regard to American dishes, but generally their native dishes are excellently prepared. In normal times, the food of the Italians in Milwaukee is wholesome, although not always suited to the climate and conditions of life.

However, there are some cases in which the nourishment of the Italian families becomes deficient in quality. This comes from an obvious reason. Families of the Italian workmen buy their provisions from Italian groceries, because the women who purchase, seldom know any language but their own dialect, and also at the Italian groceries they are given credit when they are unable to pay cash. Some of the groceries in the Third

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Ward are fairly well supplied, but some have a limited stock of goods and are not run in a very favorable, sanitary way. The customers of these stores have little to choose from and must be satisfied with that which they find, and even if they can afford to pay cash, they would not go elsewhere, either out of gratitude for the credit given in the past or because of the possibility of a need in the future. They are therefore obliged to accept the goods, in whatever condition they find them.

## VII.

### HEALTH CONDITIONS

JUDGING from the official report of the Health Department of the city, the health conditions of the Italian colony seems to be good, even better than those of some other districts. The Bulletin of the Health Department of April, 1915, gave 2,032 cases of tuberculosis in the city, which is about 5 per thousand of the whole population.

Of this number, in the records of the tuberculosis department, can be found only 13 cases among Italians, which gives a percentage of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per thousand of the whole. Italian population calculated at 9,000.

However, tuberculosis is more widely spread in the Third Ward than is shown in official reports. This is due to the fact that in the majority of cases, as soon as the doctor shows that he suspects tuberculosis, and even before the diagnosis is certain, the sick ones hurry to leave the city. Some of them fear to be listed at the T. B. Department, feeling certain unreasonable shame, as though tuberculosis might disgrace the whole family. They believe that in returning to Italy they can recover their health more easily, and this is quite true. Some others go to California where the climate is more temperate and more like that of Sicily. In many cases those who have not the money to pay the expenses of the trip to Italy, take up a collection among friends, or in the colony; or they resort to the Consular Agent, to take advantage of the help which the Italian Government allows the emigrants, who need to be taken home, so that they may not be an expense to public charity.

The cases that figure in the statistics of the Health Department are the few whose condition is too serious to enable them to travel, or those who have no relatives in Italy and are definitely settled in America. This custom of returning to Italy explains also the fact that the mortality among the Italians

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is much lower than among those of other nationalities. It is also to be noted that 75% of the cases of tuberculosis among Italians are children or young people born or grown up in America. The others are adult people with five or four years residence, and the larger number are women. The most common fatal disease among Italians is pneumonia, but the most frequent complaint is rheumatism.

In the 149 families examined we have found 86 cases of diseases distributed as in the following table:

Tuberculosis or suspected,	18
Rheumatism,	12
Stomach Trouble,	7
Typhoid Fever,	6
Heart Trouble,	2
Insanity,	3
Venereal Diseases,	5
Pneumonia,	5
Various,	28

Of these 86 cases, 81 were acquired in America and only 5 imported from Italy, which were 3 cases of syphilis, which developed into cerebral paralysis, and 2 cases of malarial fever. The causes of diseases in the Italian colony of Milwaukee are principally:

- a) The difference in climate from that of Sicily.
- b) Occupations involving exposure to irritating dusts, poisonous fumes and vapors, excessive humidity, intense heat, and so on.
- c) The frequent periods of idleness which necessitate deficient nourishment.
- d) The unhygienic conditions of the district and the excessive overcrowding of the houses.
- e) The lack of prophylaxis in contagious diseases.

(a) CLIMATE: In Southern Italy stoves are not used, and in the mountain countries only during the coldest days of



winter, when fires are lighted in movable braziers to heat the houses. Therefore the women of the colony have no experience in methods of heating common to America. In the majority of cases of the Italian workmen in Milwaukee, a wood or coal stove in the kitchen is the only source of warmth; the other rooms are heated only at night before going to bed. During the day the family life centers in the kitchen, which is often too small and in bad hygienic condition. The men too often unemployed during the winter, gather in groups of three or four and sometimes more, to chat and play cards around the stove. The Italians are not accustomed to staying indoors, and go in and out continually to the nearby saloons or houses of friends, from the warmth of the house to the cold of the streets without putting on heavy wraps. Pneumonia, rheumatism and tuberculosis are developed.

(b) **WORK:** In the foundries the Italians cannot endure long; rarely can they work more than nine or ten years under the best conditions, without completely ruining their health. Those who work at furnaces are exhausted more easily. Work in tanneries is relatively less tiresome, where some are employed to fix skins on frames for drying, but the poisonous vapors which emanate from the materials are very bad for their lungs. It is to be considered once more that most of them were country men and used to work in open air and sunshine. Their present life in shops and factories, being entirely in opposition to the surroundings in which they grew up and developed in their native land, they are more exposed to diseases from unhealthy work, than others who come from families of generations of shop workmen.

(c) **MALNUTRITION:** This is the cause generally given by Americans for the diseases and bad physical conditions of the Italians, but it is usual only during their long periods of unemployment.

(d) **OVERCROWDING:** Another important cause of disease is the unhygienic condition of the houses and the excessive crowding of which we have already spoken, and which, in addition to the lack of prophylaxis, helps to spread infectious dis-



eases. Undoubtedly the lack of such proper precautions is due to ignorance and it must not be forgotten that a large number of the Italians in the colony come of the peasant class of the poorest villages of Sicily, in which schools have been established only a few years. Many of these people have no idea what infection is and cannot believe that diseases are brought by germs. Among old women there are those who believe that diseases are produced by the evil influence of some person of extraordinary power. Such beliefs often cause unfortunate consequences, as such superstitious persons think that one glance or one touch of the hand of one who wishes to harm you is sufficient to produce a sickness which no doctor nor medicine can cure. In these cases another person is called in, who possesses superior power and who is stronger than the one who did the harm. Naturally there are always people who speculate on these superstitions of the old people, and make them believe they possess such power, thereby acquiring not only a good trade, but also complete control over the simple.

In Italy such mystification is severely punished by law, and these superstitious practices survive only in the villages far away from the cities, and only among older people who did not go to school.

## VIII.

### DISEASES OF THE CHILDREN

THE Report of Italians in Chicago said that rickets, a disease due to malnutrition, is exceedingly prevalent among the children of Italian working people. And the same belief is widely spread in Milwaukee about the Italian children. Our inquiry on this point gave us the following facts:

The disease most prevalent among the Italian children of the Third Ward is enteritis in its various forms and complications. The Italian doctor who offered his services in the dispensary for children placed in the Detroit Street School, calculated that 75% of the nursing babies examined by him were sick with enteritis and that the fact was due to careless feeding. In Sicily in the country districts, artificial feeding of babies is rarely used, only in cases of absolute necessity; but the Italian women in Milwaukee frequently substitute the bottle for the natural nourishment. Sometimes they do this because they themselves are undernourished, during the several months of the year when their husbands are idle. Unfortunately, most of the mothers have not learned how to prepare the artificial food properly, and give the babies solids, earlier than is wise. It is a fact that the Italian children of many families that were born and brought up in America, have not the fine physical development of their parents, who still bear traces of beauty in spite of a life full of hard toil and privation. However, in comparison with the children of other nationalities, Italian children are found in good condition. The table published by the "Report of the Medical Department of the Schools" of Milwaukee, for the year ending June, 1913, offers us valuable material on the health and hygiene of the Italian children who attend the school. The majority of those children are found in the Detroit Street School, which is in the center of the Italian district. In the Jefferson Street School there are several classes of Italian

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children, because the Detroit Street School had no place for them.

In the Detroit Street School there is a total of 1,025 scholars, of which 1,002 were Italians, 98% of the total; therefore we may consider the school as composed entirely of Italians. The total number of schools in Milwaukee in the said year was 63, with 49,205 pupils. From the Report we have the following figures on contagious diseases:

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## GENERAL CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Diseases:	Diph- theria	Scarlet Fever	Measles	Mumps	Chicken- pox	Per- tussis	Acute Tonsillitis	Con- tagious Contact	Total
Number of Italian chil- dren, . . . . .	17	6	6	....	5	....	2	....	36
Total sick children in all schools, . . . . .	222	311	180	56	236	31	119	98	1253
Highest number of sick children in one school, Name of the school, {	28 21st St. School	16 Jefferson St. School	20 18th St. School	14 31st St. School	22 31st St. School	4 12th St. School	10 Prairie St. School	14 Mineral St. School	128 31st School
Place of Detroit Street School in numerical graduation of classes,	5th	18th	14th	....	15th	....	17th	....	12th

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From these figures one sees there are in Milwaukee, districts in which infectious diseases are more prevalent than among the Italians, and evidently there are people in worse condition than those in the Third Ward, even though the Detroit Street School is one of the oldest in the city and not constructed with the improvements demanded by new methods. Not less important is the comparison between the Detroit Street School and the others on eye and skin diseases.

## EYE AND SKIN DISEASES

Diseases:	Pedi- culosis	Eye	Ring- worm	Scabies	Im- petigo	Favus	Mol- luscum Contag.	Eczema	Miscel- laneous	Total
Number of sick children in Detroit Street School	102	103	2	6	137	...	1	14	518	883
Total in the other Schools	2734	1493	82	98	358	4	...	245	11731	16745
Highest number in one school, . . . .	549	173	10	16	137	2	1	28	539	1455
Name of such school, Place of Detroit Street School in numerical graduation of diseases,	9th St.	31st St.	Park St.	Cold Sp.	Detroit	16th St.	Detroit	38th St.	9th St.	31st St.
	8th	6th	12th	5th	1st	....	1st	5th	2d	3rd

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The condition presented by the Italian children of the Detroit Street School is much better in regard to physical defects and non-contagious diseases.

Diseases:	Detroit Street School	Other Schools Total of All	Italian Percentage
Hyper. Tonsils, . . . . .	12	3,604	0.33 per 100
Adenoids, . . . . .	6	322	1.75 "
Defect. Nasal Breathing, . . . . .	..	426	0.00 "
Defect. Palate, . . . . .	..	37	0.00 "
Defective Teeth, . . . . .	9	11,798	0.08 "
Myopia, . . . . .	3	1,798	0.16 "
Hypermotopia, . . . . .	..	19	0.00 "
Other Eye Defects, . . . . .	1	134	0.75 "
Defective Hearing, . . . . .	1	64	1.56 "
Orthopedic Spine, . . . . .	..	49	0.90 "
Orthopedic Trunk, . . . . .	1	31	
Orthopedic Extremities, . . . . .	..	33	
Enlarged Lymph. Nodes, . . . . .	2	1,857	0.11 "
Pulmonary Diseases, . . . . .	..	39	0.00 "
Cardiac Diseases, . . . . .	..	95	0.00 "
Nervous, . . . . .	..	89	0.00 "
Chorea, . . . . .	..	14	0.00 "
Epilepsy, . . . . .	..	6	0.00 "
Goiter, . . . . .	..	33	0.00 "
Stammer, . . . . .	..	17	0.00 "
Totals, . . . . .	35	20,465	0.17 "

It seems from this table that Italian children resist disease very well, perhaps better than children of other nationalities.

## IX.

### HOSPITAL CARE

IT is generally found that Italians are very unwilling to be taken to American hospitals. Many times they prefer to suffer and die in their own homes without means for being properly treated and putting themselves to great expense, even refusing free treatment at the hospitals. Apropos of this aversion, the Report, "The Italians in Chicago," states that the cause of this is that the Italians cannot adapt themselves to the radical change of food to which they are subjected in going from their homes to the hospitals.

However, there are other reasons equally or perhaps more strong and more interesting that combine to create this antipathy to hospitals and sanatoriums managed by Americans. The hospitals in Italy are very ancient, the oldest that history records, and have always been of a charitable character, caring only for those people who are miserable and destitute. In the minds of the people, at least in many regions of Italy, they still exist for this purpose. In the towns and villages the medical service is the responsibility and at the expense of the municipality, which maintains one or more doctors who are obliged to visit the sick, poor people in their homes without any obligatory fee. From this it may be seen that only the poorest people, those who are not even able to buy medicines and necessary food, are taken to hospitals. To go to a hospital for such a reason is regarded as a disgrace, being a confession of complete destitution. To go to the hospital for operations or treatments which would be impossible at home, is common in Italy but only among the poorest classes. (Also, it is common in large cities among the rich, but for them there are, as everywhere, private rooms.) When these facts are known, it is easy to understand that Italian laborers in Milwaukee, who come from rural villages of Sicily, have a prejudice against hospitals in



general, but their aversion is stronger against American hospitals in particular, because it often happens that these workingmen do not know one word of the English language with which to explain their needs; the encouragement of the doctor and nurses is a great help and comfort, and often more valuable than the medicine. All of this is lacking to the poor Italian laborer in an American hospital. At times the effort to make other people understand makes the sick one nervous and he suffers physically and mentally. It is this feeling of dismay and spiritual isolation that frightens the Italian. No wonder he prefers to stay home where his wife and children are always near to encourage him and keep his spirits up. Those who observe case after case, notice in fact that those who refuse to go to the hospitals are precisely those who cannot speak English or those who have had one experience there.

In the 149 families studied we found 9 cases of sickness in which hospital care was absolutely refused, and of them in 3 cases the sick person knew little English, and in 6 cases they had been taken to the hospital before.

In a total of 86 cases of diseases, 25 accepted the hospitals' free treatment; 14 were in the pay section; 12 were treated at the free dispensaries; 35 at home.

To overcome the aversion to the American hospitals among the Italian workingmen, a certain modification in the diet would be necessary as suggested by Wight, and also an Italian nurse, and possibly an Italian doctor to deal with the Italian cases.

## X.

### EDUCATION

WE have said that Italian children attend the School at Detroit Street, where the 98 per cent of all the pupils are Italians. In the report of the School Board of Milwaukee, for the year ending June 31, 1913, we find the following figures of the enrollment in the said school:

Grade:	Number of Pupils Enrolled	Grade:	Number of Pupils Enrolled
Eighth Grade, . . .	22	Seventh Grade, .	22
Sixth Grade, . . .	556	Fifth Grade, .	87
Fourth Grade, . . .	128	Third Grade, .	115
Second Grade, . . .	105	First Grade, .	144
Ungraded, . . . .	26	Kindergarten, .	114

The total of enrolled pupils was 1,091. This number increased in the following two years and as the school building at Detroit Street was too small for such numbers of children, four classes of the highest grades were removed to the school building on Jefferson Street. Besides, many Italian children were scattered in the other schools of the city near the residences of their parents. Their number can be calculated at about 200. In all, we have about 1,450 Italian children attending the city public schools in grammar and primary grades, classes and kindergartens. In regard to the attendance the Report gives us the following figures:

Total Pupils Enrolled, . . . . .	1,091
Average Daily Membership, . . . . .	939
Average Daily Attendance, . . . . .	984
Cases of Truancy, . . . . .	29

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In the cases of truancy, the most common reason for the non-attendance of the children was poverty, and especially in winter time the need of shoes and clothing; in a few cases the fault was the parents' and especially the mothers', who, being extraordinarily busy, or for some other reason forced their children (in these cases little girls) to stay home and take care of the family babies.

Only in two or three cases the Truancy office had to deal with children whose non-attendance was caused by parents' negligence. In comparison with schools of other districts, the Detroit Street School does not present an excessive number of truancy cases, as the Report shows:

School:	Number of Pupils Enrolled	Daily Attendance	Truancy Cases
1. Ninth Street School, . . .	1237	953	74
2. Eighth Street School, . . .	859	533	64
3. Fifth Avenue School, . . .	1079	756	43
4. Hanover Street School, . . .	1391	1127	36
5. North Pierce Street School, . . .	946	694	33
6. Fourth Street School, . . .	987	703	29
7. Detroit Street School, . . .	1091	894	29

The other schools give a number of cases less than 29 each.

It is to be noted that the Italian children frequent only the public schools. Though almost all Italian families are Catholic, they do not send their children to the Catholic Parochial Schools, as Catholic Irish and Germans do. Some attempts to have them send their children to the private sectarian schools failed. In Italy there are neither Parochial Schools, nor Sectarian education for children of the lower classes; therefore, the Italian families in Milwaukee trust public schools more fully than the others, and prefer to have their children educated under the control of the city rather than the church. This

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explains the fact that the Italian children are Americanized more rapidly than children of other nationalities, for example, Polish children who attend the Parochial Polish schools, where not only they learn the Polish language, but they breathe Polish spirit and ideas through the Polish environment.

Another reason which makes Italian families in Milwaukee prefer public to private schools is the opportunity given to Detroit Street pupils to learn the Italian language. This wise provision of the Milwaukee School Board makes the public schools more useful and sympathetic to the Italian families.

It is very frequently the case that Italian parents speaking nothing but their native dialect and living always in close connection with Italian speaking neighborhoods, never learn the English language. On the other hand the Italian children attending school, most of the day, and after school playing on the streets or selling papers on the city corners, do not have any practice in the Italian language and easily forget the few words they knew, and the time arrives when the parents and children are unable to understand each other. Such a state of affairs could be only a serious menace to the cohesion and the normal development of those families. Teaching the Italian language in the public school is therefore an efficacious measure against this danger and at the same time secures the attendance of the Italian children at the said school, hastening their Americanization and through them the Americanization of their parents.

The number of Italian children attending the high schools is very small now; it will increase as soon as economic conditions improve and Italians are not obliged to send their children to work as soon as they reach the legal age, in order to support themselves or to help the family.

Various are the judgments of teachers concerning the average development of mind of Italian children and their attitude toward learning. Those given by several Milwaukee teachers who have had long experience with Italian children would indicate that they are generally intelligent and quite proficient in their school work. However, several teachers observed that most Italian children are very

thorough in the mechanical part of their work, while they are rather slow at those things which require continued thought. The same teachers believed that the cause of such slowness in thinking lies in the fact that they have no generations of trained minds back of them.

Other teachers disagree and emphasize the promptness of these children in grasping ideas which are suggested by teachers and in putting them together in their composition work.

During fourteen years of my teaching in Italy, among children of South Italy, I found such slowness an exception. Furthermore, Italian teachers who have had experience in teaching both children of North and South Italy, constantly remark that South Italian children are generally quicker mentally than their brothers of the North. Therefore, if Italian children of Milwaukee, who are usually from the South Italian families, show that characteristic of slowness of mind, there must be some peculiar reason which produces it.

The one given, the lack of generations of trained minds back of them, is not conclusive. Besides, the fact that the general scientific value and importance of that theory today is very small, we must observe that it is hard to apply such a theory to the Sicilian people, even to peasants, considering the historical background of people and their coming from a mixture of different races.\*

The childrens' slowness of perception is frequently due to the difficulty with language. Many Italian pupils are deficient in English. This means that while they know practical English and speak as fluently as other children, they are deficient in grammar and syntax. This deficiency less apparent in the lower

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\*NOTE: Apropos of those racial mixtures, one of the interviewed teachers pointed out that some peculiar characteristics of the Sicilian children are to be attributed to the negro blood they are supposed to have in their veins. The ignorance of Sicilian history may make many Americans hold those convictions, confounding the Arabs and Saracens who ruled Sicily for more than two centuries, with the negro races of Africa; Arabs, far from being negroes, were the purest representatives of the Semitic race. Sicilians and South Italians as a race have no negro blood in their veins, and to say the contrary is a great mistake.

grades, becomes the great handicap of these children in high grades when they begin composition work.

For a teacher who does not realize the efforts of these children during the period of transforming their mental habits, their thoughts, their language, to which the American schools submit them, it is easy to misunderstand.

Concerning the attitude of Italian children toward learning one of the Milwaukee teachers expressed herself in the following words:

"Italian children do not resist teaching any more than all children do. In the majority of cases the children seem to lack the desire to stick to school. I was about to say that they seem too well content with their condition, but that is the fault of the parents; and if these parents have hundreds of years of people back of them who have lived in a hot country, as doubtless they have, I should say that the children are doing well. As to their discipline I should say that they are suspicious of any one who tries to govern them by reasoning with them. I believe that they are not accustomed to it. From what they tell me, they get 'hit' at home for any offense or misdemeanor. I feel certain that if they were reasoned with at home and at school from the Kindergarten on, they would be easy to manage."

Just how much influence the climate of America may have upon children whose forefathers lived for hundreds of years in the hot climate of Sicily, is of course problematical. The lack of desire to improve their condition, cannot be given as a general or even as a very frequent feeling among Italian children in the colony. If you ask as I did, a hundred Italian children if they would prefer to be Americans rather than Italians, ninety-five per cent will answer that they would prefer to be Americans. It is natural for them to do so, because they do not know anything about Italy, but the poverty and hard work of their parents and of the other families in the colony, in comparison with the comfortable life of American well-to-do people. In their unconscious shame in being Italian, there is a strong desire to

improve themselves and to climb to a higher grade in their social life.

The fact that there are some children who (though eager to improve upon the position of their fathers), dislike the school, is a problem more of methods and teachers, than a physiological one.

Furthermore, this question is closely connected with the discipline in the school. Italian children, especially Sicilians, are very sensible to kindness and love, but they become at once diffident and suspicious if they feel that people dealing with them are unemotional and contemptuous.

Their intuition is very keen in regard to this, and being also very impulsive, they cannot be mastered by fear. They are easy to manage if people understand them and show a true interest in them.



## XI.

### DELINQUENCY

THE principal charge against the Italians of Milwaukee, which is also the principal charge brought against all the Italians in America, is that of contributing largely to the delinquent and criminal element. Maybe in this regard there is exaggeration. The available statistics from the Annual Reports of the Chief of Police and others that we have been able to gather, give us an idea of the situation. We shall limit ourselves to the years 1910-1913, which period is sufficient to establish a basis.

#### ITALIANS ARRESTED

Years.	Total No. of Persons Arrested	Italians Arrested	Percentage Italians Arrested	Total Number Discharged	Percentage of Discharged
1910..	8,827	119	1.35%	828	9.40%
1911..	9,145	134	1.47%	759	8.30%
1912..	8,972	174	1.94%	849	9.50%
1913..	9,892	193	1.95%	762	7.70%
Total.	36,836	620	1.67%	3,198	8.68%

In order to form an idea of the value of these percentages, as compared with those given of citizens of other nationalities, we transcribe herewith the entire statistics given in the Report of the Chief of Police for the year 1913.



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## NATIVITY OF PERSONS ARRESTED. REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1913

Nationality:	Number Arrested	Percentage	Discharged
United States, . . . . .	5,809	58.72	{ Figures by Nationalities not given.
German, . . . . .	1,079	10.91	
Austria-Hungary, . . . . .	842	8.51	
Poland, . . . . .	686	6.93	{ Average 8.68 per cent in 1910-1913
Russia, . . . . .	595	6.02	
Italy, . . . . .	193	1.95	
Greece, . . . . .	144	1.46	
Ireland, . . . . .	131	1.32	{ and 7.70 per cent in 1913
England-Scotland, . . . . .	111	1.12	
Canada, . . . . .	57	0.58	
Norway, . . . . .	57	0.58	....
All other countries, . . . . .	188	1.90	....
Totals, . . . . .	9,892	100.	....

From this table one would deduce that the percentage number of arrests contributed by the Italians is not very high, either considered alone or considered in relation to that of other nationalities, and that the percentage of delinquency to the Italian population is not dis-proportionate.

One must keep in mind that the number of arrests does not represent the number of crimes committed, nor the violations of ordinances and laws. The Italians enjoy the well deserved reputation of hiding their crimes with great skill, managing to elude the police. This, of course, leads one to conclude that the percentage of offences given ought to be greater, in order to have the figures near the truth. The Police Reports do not show the number of crimes of which the perpetrators remain unknown, and therefore no approximate number can be given. But, whenever the perpetrator of a crime was unknown, one or more persons were arrested on suspicion, and these ar-

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rests are counted in the statistics. The importance of these crimes is not due to the number, but to their nature, as we shall see.

Unfortunately the said Reports of the Police Department, speaking of the causes of the arrests, do not mention the nationality of the offenders, but, after careful search, we have been able to gather the following approximate figures:

Classification of Arrests	1910	1911	1912	1913	Total	Ital-ians	Per-cent-age
Abandoning family, . .	320	257	342	245	1164	.....	.....
Assault and battery, . .	730	768	711	795	.....	.....	.....
Assault with intent to do great bodily harm, . .	19	37	32	22	3183	18	0.59
Assault with intent to kill,	19	20	14	16	.....	.....	.....
Burglary . . . . .	99	144	112	108	463	4	0.64
Carrying concealed weap- ons, . . . . .	76	112	64	103	355	165	48.50
Common drunkard, . .	137	110	108	142	497	.....	.....
Contributing to delin- quency of child, . .	.....	.....	28	17	45	1	2.22
Cruelty to animals, . .	38	18	23	14	93	1	1.07
Disorderly conduct, . .	1966	1940	1635	1926	7467	109	1.19
Drunkenness, . . . .	1021	999	1047	1000	4067	3	0.07
Drunk and disorderly, .	1948	1821	1789	1982	7540	21	0.027
Embezzlement, . . .	66	58	59	45	228	.....	.....
Forgery and fraudulent bank checks, . . .	49	50	58	78	235	.....	.....
Fugitive, . . . . .	96	92	90	109	387	.....	.....
Indecent exposure, . .	36	35	31	27	129	2	1.55
Inmates or keeping dis- orderly houses, . .	113	132	99	357	701	6	0.85
Larceny, . . . . .	375	329	361	333	1398	15	1.07
Murder, . . . . .	14	11	8	10	43	12	27.95
Threatening to kill, . .	32	27	28	19	106	12	11.33
Vagrancy, . . . . .	480	566	626	705	2377	36	1.09
Violating city ordinances,	602	731	626	913	2872	174	6.89
Wilful destruction of property, . . . . .	34	38	30	28	130	2	1.53
All other cases, . . .	551	875	1106	913	3445	39	1.10
Totals, . . . . .	8,821	9,170	9,027	9,907	36,925	620	1.68

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From this table we can draw many interesting conclusions. The largest percentage of arrested Italians is on charges of murder, threatening to kill, and carrying concealed weapons. With some very peculiar exceptions all the acts of violence were perpetrated by Italians on persons of their own nationality, and all the 11 persons murdered presumably by Italians in Milwaukee from 1910 to 1913, were also Italians. Only a few cases of assault are to be found, which were perpetrated by Italians on people of other nationalities.

These are the statistics of Italian murders in Milwaukee from 1910 to 1913:

### ITALIAN MURDERS

Year:	Murdered		Slayer		
	Men	Women	Unknown	Sentenced	Discharged
1910, . . .	2	..	1	..	1
1911, . . .	1	..	1	..	..
1912, . . .	3	..	2	..	1
1913, . . .	4	1	2	2	..
Totals, .	10	1	6	2	2

Only two of these murders can be characterized as "passional crimes" for love affairs. One was committed in assault for robbery. We do not know the cause of the others, because the slayers remained unknown, but probably they were acts of vengeance for real or fancied wrongs. One receives the impression that several of them may be linked together as different acts in the same drama. It is not easy to form a fair judgment of such acts, but it seems evident that the colony has had to pass through an internal crisis which manifested itself externally and ended in a sanguinary manner. This would also explain why a great part of these crimes (those which are linked together), remain wrapped in mystery.

It is also to be noted that several of the murdered persons did not enjoy a very good reputation among Italians, and that

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

their disappearance from life was not at all regretted in the colony. This kind of Italian crime generally is not dangerous to people of other nationalities.

### CONCEALED WEAPONS

Carrying concealed weapons is the cause of most Italian arrests. This is a relic of the brigandage in South Italy, when every citizen was obliged to carry weapons for his protection. The brigandage has almost entirely disappeared in those provinces, but the habit of carrying weapons is even now one of the most frequent causes of crime in Sicily. Very often young men carry weapons without any reason and only to feel strong and proud.

### CITY ORDINANCES

A great number of Italian laborers have been arrested for violating city ordinances. Most of them for ignorance, not for disregard of the laws, and in this regard it is to be noted that frequently proceedings of the policemen in such cases are very deplorable and produce complications and serious disorders.

A CASE: Two Italians with two wagons were moving furniture. The house was in the middle of the block, and the Italians did not drive to the corner and back, keeping to the right as is required, but stopped directly at the door. A policeman from the next corner asked the names of both and went away. When the wagons were half unloaded, he came back with four other policemen and arrested the Italians, leaving wagons, horses and furniture on the street without a watchman. In the evening a friend of the men paid bail of \$30.00 and they were released. They found their wagons, horses and furniture still on the street. The men were terribly angry at the policeman, and while recognizing their mistake, they could not understand, as nobody could, the manner and method of the officers. Matters of this kind which happen very frequently do not tend to make Italian laborers sympathetic with policemen; on the

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

contrary, they make stronger the feeling of suspicion toward the agents of the law, and corroborate the belief that law is not for the good, but for the oppression of the poor. Many wrongs, and perhaps many crimes, could be avoided if American policemen were willing to adopt more reasonable and intelligent methods with Italian laborers, especially when violations of law are due to ignorance, rather than to deliberate ill will.

### ABANDONMENT

Not an Italian case of abandonment has been brought to the court in four years, and only a few cases are known in the colony of men who have abandoned wives living in Italy. It is comfortable to realize from this fact that Italians have a strong sense of duty towards their families.

### DRUNKENNESS

The number of arrests for "drunkenness" or "drunk and disorderly" is very small, and many of these were young people grown up in America, and some born here of Italian families. Among Italians of the second generation, there is to be found a larger number of drunkards than among their fathers, though the standard of their living is higher and their education more advanced.

### JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

With regard to juvenile delinquency, the Italians contribute very little; in fact, during one year, out of more than two thousand delinquent children brought before the Juvenile Court, only **twelve** boys and **one** girl were Italians. Ten boys whose ages ranged from 9 to 18, were guilty of having stolen a little coal from the tracks; they were given a good lecture and were put on probation; one of the other two delinquent boys soon showed that he had mended his ways; the other continued to commit thefts of all kinds, and was repeatedly brought into court, and put under very rigorous surveillance.

In four years only one girl was brought into court on the charge of disorderly conduct, and she was more a victim of the brutality of a boarder than guilty of immorality.

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### FEMALE CRIMES

Crimes among the females in the colony were found in two important cases; the case of a wife, who strangled her husband, and was sentenced to life imprisonment; and the case of a girl of 20, who shot and slightly wounded a man, who was really a bad character, and, according to her contention, had tried to extort money from her family with threats of violence. She was found guilty of assault and was sentenced to serve 90 days in the County Jail.

### PROSTITUTION

The Report of the Wisconsin Vice Commission of 1914, contains a table of 60 cases of prostitution, which are given as typical and which have been verified by an investigation committee whose work included not only Milwaukee, but all the larger cities of Wisconsin. In this table of 60 cases there were only 2 Italians, against 14 Irish, 11 Germans, 10 colored, 4 Americans, 4 Polish, 3 French, 3 Jewish, 1 English, 1 Scotch, and 7 others. This table does not purport to give statistics, but taking into consideration the accuracy with which it is compiled, and the fact of its cases being typical, it may serve as an approximate basis for statistics. Taking these figures then as an average for Wisconsin, one can be very certain that the Italian feminine element contributes much less to prostitution than does that of any other nationality.

### EXPLOITATION

Besides the offenses which fall under the purview of the penal code, there exists a kind of abuse which escapes the law, but which is none the less pernicious to the moral and economic life of the colony, namely that of exploitation. One of the most common sources of this exploitation lies in the distribution of jobs. There are a number of persons making a comfortable living from this industry, and they have succeeded in monopolizing the granting of a certain kind of job among the Italians.



Another kind of exploitation is that practiced against one who has violated in any way the penal code, and is brought into court. An illiterate Italian, who did not know a single word of English, was arrested not long ago, for violating one of the city ordinances. During the night, a cousin who came to know of the arrest, went to the police station and bailed the man out. In the meantime someone without even notifying or consulting the prisoner, had ordered a lawyer, to appear for him. The day after, when the case was called in court, this lawyer appeared for the prisoner, who did not understand what was going on, and did not know that he had a lawyer. The poor Italian went to a friend to obtain advice, and was referred to a lawyer who was willing to lend his services free of charge. This lawyer went to court, only to be informed that the poor Italian was represented by counsel. Of course the lawyer sent by the friend withdrew. The Italian was fined \$15.00 and costs, amounting in all to \$22.00, and the lawyer who was not retained by him, demanded and received \$10 for his services. The victim, either through ignorance or fear, generally bows to such exploitation, resigning himself to pay the not indifferent amount asked.

A third form of exploitation is that of contract work. We do not mean those contracts where the contractor invests capital, but those for the performance of which he furnishes workingmen and nothing else. The following is a typical case of this kind: An Italian laborer, with a large family to support, is engaged in unloading coal for an Italian contractor. This man receives \$1.50 per day, and must perform a definite amount of work, for which the contractor gets \$3.00 from the railroad company. Thus one-half of what the company pays for unloading coal goes into the pockets of the contractor, who does not invest anything of his own, and who, without labor, by this method of exploitation, makes from \$200 to \$500 per month. While the poor laborers have to work in the coal dust, risk their lives, and on that small sum support themselves and their families, the contractor lives like a prince, and has for his victims no more consideration than he would have for a dog in the street.

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

It is impossible to give statistics of what is called "the black hand" organization, that is, extortion of money and favors through anonymous letters. There is probably not a person of any importance in the colony who has not received now and then such letters, threatening and demanding a more or less large sum of money. Generally these letters are not brought to the attention of the police, the matter being settled in a friendly way, as the person who received such letters is almost always anxious to buy his peace. At times the receiver of such a black-hand letter does not comply with the demands, and the matter is dropped right there and then; at other times, particularly when the blackhand letter falls into the hands of the police, a bomb is exploded or other violence is done.

To sum up, one may say that although offences in the Italian colony in Milwaukee are worthy the serious attention of those interested in its development and betterment, still we are far removed from the condition depicted last year in one of the city dailies, which likened the Italian colony of Milwaukee to the slums of New York and Chicago. A great deal has been written about the delinquency of the Italians in America, containing often serious errors. This results either from lack of sufficient knowledge, or because of judgments based upon observations limited to the exceptional individuals and their environments. It is indeed a vast problem and ought to be studied in its entirety if one is to arrive at concrete conclusions; this is not possible within the limits of our modest paper, but we are bound to say a few words on this subject concerning the Italian colony of Milwaukee.

The citizens of Milwaukee and other communities are convinced that there exists a powerful association of malefactors, and that in it the greater part of the Italians, if not indeed the whole Italian population is involved. The existence of such a society would explain quite satisfactorily that bloody crimes were acts of vengeance against suspected or faithless members; that the extortions were means of replenishing their exchequers; and that the prevailing stubborn silence was due to vows and to fear for their own lives. But those who are well acquainted



with conditions in the colony know quite well that such an organization exists only in the fancy of the newspaper reporter and romancer. In reality, there are only a few individuals who, having run the whole gamut of crimes, find it convenient to live in peace and even with honor at the expense of those ignorant people, who allow themselves to be intimidated by threats and bombs. The so-called Black Handers are often individuals who were forced to leave Italy, because the police were seeking them; since coming to America they have lived in five or six different states of the Union, migrating whenever they found themselves in a compromising position. Three or four of these individuals with a few inexperienced and deluded youths to execute their plans, are enough for the work of the group to run smoothly. In America the conditions are generally favorable, because of:—

1. The facility with which one can pass from one city or state to another, making it easy to elude the vigilance of the police, especially on account of the fact that here (unlike Italy) the police organization of each city works almost independently of that of every other city, which renders discovery of the criminal a difficult and complicated matter. Furthermore, the autonomy of each city police department leaves the apprehension of the criminals who have committed their crimes in other cities to the judgment and honesty of each Chief of Police; and it has very often been the case that in certain cities of the United States, (thanks to the bought complicity of the chief or some other influential police officer), there is organized immunity for criminals of all kinds. Such cities are a temporary but safe refuge, while time is effacing remembrance of the criminal in his own community;

2. The readiness with which one can change one's name, nationality and residence, without positive discovery, on account of the great mixture of nationalities in this country;

3. Political influence which often interferes with justice;

4. The ease with which one can be bailed out, for almost any crime. It has been impossible to get statistics of accused

persons, who, having been bailed out, have preferred to lose their bail money to standing trial and the police lose all trace of them. Such statistics would be very eloquent.

Besides these causes due to the methods of justice in the United States, there are others which have their origin in the peculiar conditions of the Italian colonies. The truly educated people of Italy do not yet emigrate to the United States, for the reason that there is a large field of endeavour for them in the new Italy, and they leave emigration to the laborers and to persons incapable of serious intellectual work, and yet unaccustomed to hard physical labor. These latter, who are neither laborers nor yet of a class much above the laborers, lend themselves easily to a life of crime or to some form of exploitation of the uneducated. This does not mean that among the Italian immigrants there are not to be found some intellectually strong and cultured people; of such men there are quite a number, especially in large cities. These aid in developing the energies of the Italian laborers, and fitly represent Italy; but their influence on Italian colonies is very small, because the field is strongly held by the noisy crowd of the pseudo-educated, who as politicians, as bankers, as newspapermen, form the class prominent in business, as prominent in delinquency. The colonies are made up chiefly of laborers ignorant and frequently illiterate. Criminals, therefore, find here an easy field.

The submissiveness of the victims and their ignorance of the law and customs of this new country render it impossible for them to avail themselves of the organization which society offers them, to protect themselves from exploitation and criminal imposition. It is also easy to find followers and to initiate a large number of persons into a life of crime.

We observe that the so-called blackhand letters are received only by the Italians themselves. There is no record of attempted extortion of money from Americans or people of other nationalities. Why do so few of these letters ever fall into the hands of the police? And why is it so difficult to obtain testimony in dealing with these Italians?

Miss Ida Hull, in the "Charity Organization Bulletin," of the Russell Sage Foundation, of December, 1904, says:

"The South Italian's distrust of the machinery of government is another trait which is made more comprehensible to social workers by a knowledge of the centuries of misrule and social oppression from which he has suffered deeply. Deep down in his heart tradition, and perhaps experience, have implanted a distrust of the law and the courts, and of all connected with them. Americans soon learn how difficult it is to get South Italians to go to court as witnesses in cases of non-support and cruelty to children. Many factors enter into this problem, one of which is undoubtedly the feeling that courts are instruments of oppression, with which honest people will not choose to have any connection. Many Sicilians feel that only the cowards seek redress in the courts for personal wrongs. It would be absurd to suppose that all South Italians arrive with this attitude towards the court, or that all retain it after a few years residence. It is a tradition which must needs give way in America and in Italy and in any country with democratic institutions. But it is well for Americans to bear in mind, if the law and its administrators are to be subjects of conversation, what a train of antagonistic associations, the very words are likely to arouse in the minds of the South Italians."

There is a great deal of truth in these observations, although somewhat exaggerated, but the problem is studied from only one side, namely, from the point of view of the predisposition of a certain element among the Italians to seek justice outside of the courts. The problem, however, has another aspect, much more interesting and practical, viz: the local conditions that make it possible and even easy to develop such tendencies. Miss Hull says that it would be absurd to suppose that all Italians who arrive with this attitude maintain the same after several years' residence; yet we are witnessing a very painful fact: Crimes which remain wrapped in mystery, committed by Italians in America, are more numerous here proportionately than in Italy.

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According to the most recent Italian statistics the unpunished crimes are shown to be about 20%; in America the percentage is larger. In Milwaukee, for instance, of 13 crimes committed in four years, in only five were the perpetrators discovered, the other eight remaining unfound. There must be a cause for this aversion of the Italians to act as witnesses and complainants in the courts, and the cause is that mentioned above; the facility with which the criminals can assure themselves immunity. The Italians do not like to act as witnesses or complainants, not because they fear the courts will not mete out justice, but because the police and the courts do not give any guarantee of protection and defense against the vengeance of those whom they would readily accuse if such a guaranty existed. The unpunished criminal, who knows that he has been denounced by a compatriot of his, will find a hundred ways to avenge himself; he would perhaps be more ready to forgive an American or one of any other nationality, but an Italian, Never! And the police do not give assurance of an efficacious protection. In Italy the severe law allowing arrests without warrant and the fact that bail is not accepted, make it possible for the court to obtain the witnesses it needs to convict a criminal, and make it more difficult for the criminal to escape punishment. Rather than being a question of principle or mentality, it is a question of the organization of the courts and police system, which do not perfectly answer certain needs. I do not mean by this that the American courts and police system are defective in themselves; I merely wish to observe that these organizations, although in perfect accord with the fundamental English traditions of democratic principles and personal respect, are not always adapted to the needs, traditions, or tendencies of colonies within our cities, composed of elements from all parts of the earth. During the period of the Americanization of all these various elements, it is but logical and natural that certain social phenomena should manifest themselves in various and often new ways. It is the social pathology of an organism in the process of formation. In such a period it seems also that often the good qualities of a race are lost sight

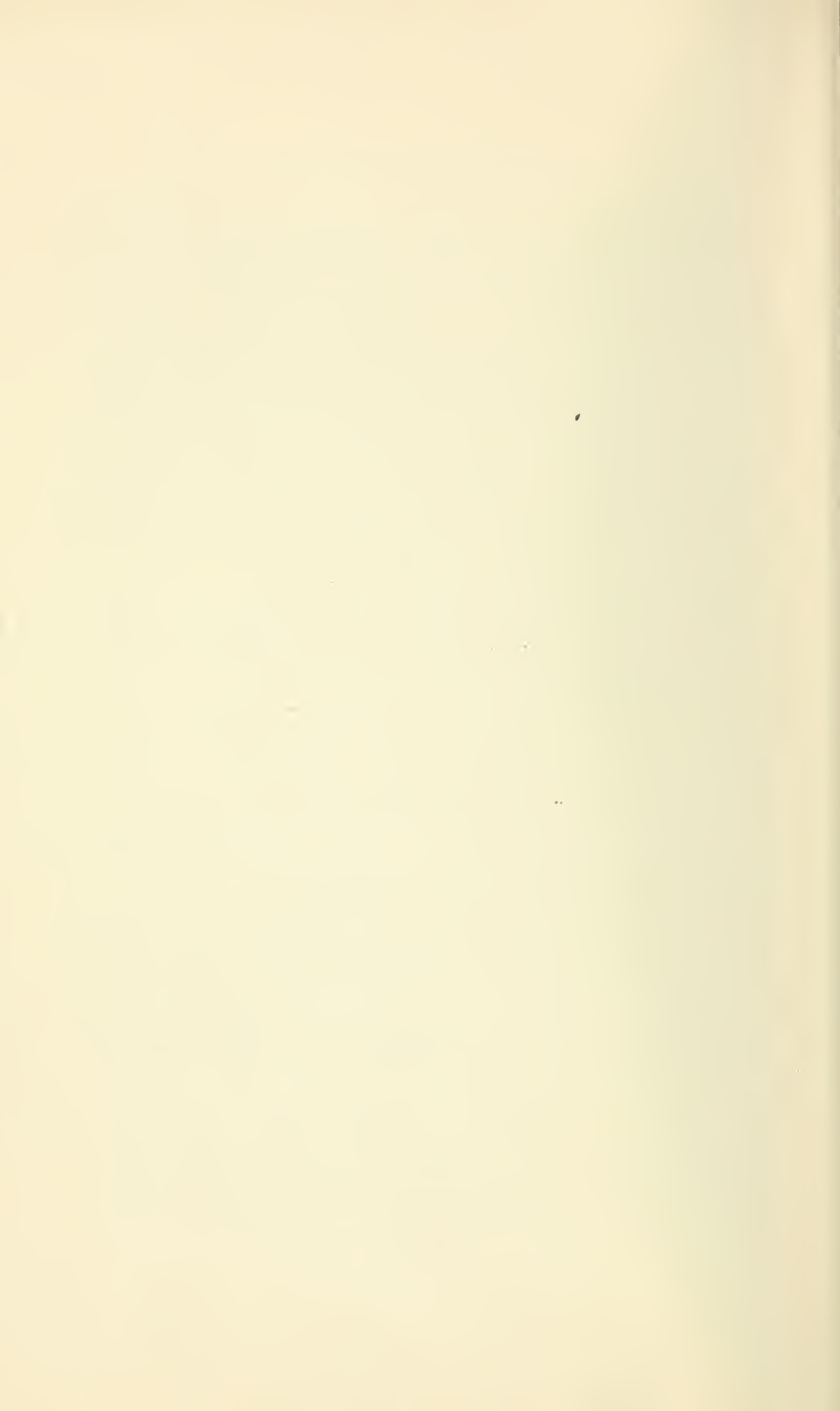
of. For example: the Italians' contribution to cases of abandonment is very small, while this crime is frequent among people of other nationalities; but almost all cases of abandonment among the Italians are found among Americanized Italians, rather than among the newly arrived Italians. Furthermore, the majority of families and individuals who have received help from public or private charities, are those who have had many years of residence in America, rather than those recently arrived. Can we say then that the race is deteriorating and that the descendants of the Italians will not become as good Americans as the others? Certainly not; the upheavals pertaining to the process of adjustment are incidents, and are peculiar to all peoples under similar circumstances.

It is undeniable that Italian immigrants are notable in penal records for offenses of personal violence, and stand out prominently as having a large percentage of homicides among their crimes; but what Prof. E. A. Steiner says in his book "On the Trail of the Immigrant," is none the less true:

"Though the prisons contain many Italians who transgressed out of ignorance as well as from passion, numbers suffer because they do not know the language of the court, and do not have coin of the realm." (Page 273.)

The statement given by the Report of the Immigration Commission of 1911, "Immigration and Crime," (Senate Documents—vol. 18), is also worthy of quotation:

"No satisfactory evidence has yet been produced to show that immigration has resulted in an increase in crime disproportionate to the increase in adult population. Immigrants are less prone to commit crime than are native Americans. The statistics do indicate that the American born children of immigrants exceed the children of natives in relative amount of crime." (Page 1.)



## II.

### PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHARITIES

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## XII.

### PUBLIC CHARITIES

IT is well known to American people interested in social topics, that Italian immigrants are not a serious burden to public institutions in this country. All the statistics of such institutions show that the percentage of Italian inmates of almshouses, hospitals, homes for children, and so on, is less than of people of other nationalities; whether in the large Italian colonies like New York, or in the smaller ones like Milwaukee.

The last report of the Bureau of Census, "Paupers in Almshouses," (Depart. of Commerce—1915), gives the following figures for the year 1910.

At January first of the said year there were in all the almshouses of the United States, 77,734 persons, distributed as follows:

Paupers of native parentage, . . . . .	32,458
Paupers of foreign or mixed parentage, . . . . .	10,077
Paupers of unknown parentage, . . . . .	1,719
Paupers foreign born, . . . . .	33,125
Paupers of unknown nativity, . . . . .	355
<hr/>	
Total, . . . . .	77,734

The foreign born were distributed by race as in the following table:

Austria-Hungary, . . . . .	1,259
Canada-English, . . . . .	1,300
Canada-French, . . . . .	528
England-Wales, . . . . .	2,922
France, . . . . .	458



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Germany, . . . . .	7,510
Ireland, . . . . .	14,177
Italy, . . . . .	427
Scandinavia, . . . . .	1,891
Russia, . . . . .	700
Scotland, . . . . .	817
Switzerland, . . . . .	513
Other, . . . . .	623
Total, . . . . .	33,125

Italian laborers working hard and living with sobriety are always able to save some money, and if they are single men, they go back to Italy to live in their native villages. If they have families and are established permanently in America, when unable to work and without an income of their own, they are supported by their sons.

Furthermore, the same reasons which make Italians dislike American hospitals, apply to almshouses and all other institutions for indoor relief, among inmates of which are only a few Italians.

The annual report of the County Hospital, County Farm and Almshouse of Milwaukee County for the year ending Sept. 30, 1913, gives the following figures:

Nationalities:	Inmates of County Hospital	Almshouse	Children's Free Hospital
America . . . . .	814	85	....
Germany, . . . . .	444	243	All Other
Austria-Hungary, . . . . .	277	24	Nationalities
England, . . . . .	40	10	582
Russia, . . . . .	89	3	....
Poland, . . . . .	81	58	....
Ireland, . . . . .	33	19	....
Italy, . . . . .	18	2	6
Various, . . . . .	88	18	....
Totals, . . . . .	1884	462	588



# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

Percentage of Italians in the County Hospitals, . . . . .	1%
Percentage of Italians in Milwaukee Almshouse, . . . . .	0.43%
Percentage of Italians in the Children's Free Hospital, . . . . .	1.02%

While Italians are unwilling to ask for indoor relief, they appeal more easily for outdoor relief.

The said report, in the Department of Outdoor Relief, gives the following figures for Milwaukee County:

## STATISTICAL REPORT OF DEPENDENT FAMILIES AIDED DURING THE YEAR 1913

Nationality:	No. of Families	Number of Persons	
America, . . . . .	410	Number of Men, . . . . .	406
Austria-Hungary, . . . . .	88	Number of Women, . . . . .	1,167
Germany, . . . . .	273	Number of children, . . . . .	4,107
Poland—Germany, . . . . .	229		
Poland—Russia, . . . . .	49	Total, . . . . .	5,680
Hebrew, . . . . .	36		
Italy, . . . . .	62	Recurrent cases, . . . . .	802
Other Nationalities, . . . . .	38	New cases, . . . . .	370
		Non-resident, . . . . .	13
Totals, . . . . .	1,185		1,185

The amount of expenses for that year was \$51,785.88. Italian percentage 5.23 per cent.

The number of families aided by this department has been increasing every year since 1913. During the last winter, because of the lack of work, more than double the amount expended in 1913, was spent for outdoor relief.

The poor list showing names, addresses and number of families drawing relief from the County of Milwaukee during the month of January, 1915, contains 3,464 families. Among them 215 were Italians, 6.20 per cent of the total.

The report does not give any figures of the causes of dependency of families by nationality, therefore, it is impossible

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

to have further details of the work of the Department among the Italians. It is true, on the other hand, that last winter was very hard both from cold and from abnormal conditions of business. The rush of daily applications to the office during those months made an accurate investigation of all cases almost impossible.

The relief consists in food, shoes, and coal. The quantity given is in relation to the size of the family. A family of 6 persons, man, woman and four children, receives per month the following:

Flour, . . . . .	40 pounds
Soap, . . . . .	3 bars
Syrup, . . . . .	4 pounds
Fresh Meat, . . . . .	12 pounds
Salt Meat, . . . . .	4 pounds
Lard, . . . . .	2 pounds
Coffee, . . . . .	2 pounds
Tea, . . . . .	1 pound
Sugar, . . . . .	5 pounds
Rice, . . . . .	3 pounds
Beans, . . . . .	4 pounds
Cornmeal, . . . . .	2 pounds
Peas, . . . . .	2 pounds
Oatmeal, . . . . .	3 pounds
Prunes, . . . . .	3 pounds
Peaches, . . . . .	1 pound

The amount is valued at \$11.97.

The flour, soap, and fresh meat was given twice a month, the other food once a month. About the quality of food and the tastes of Italians we have spoken heretofore. Shoes were given largely to children attending schools. One-half ton of coal a month, either hard or soft, was given in many cases.

## MOTHERS' PENSION

The "Mothers' Pension," or "State Aid to Dependent Children," as it is called in Wisconsin, was approved July, 1913, and in Milwaukee County was put into effect August 1st, 1913. The statement of money expended from August 1st,

# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

1913, to August 1st, 1914, as ordered by the Judge of the Juvenile Court of Milwaukee, presents the following figures:

Nationality:	No. of Cases	Aban- don'd	Di- vore'd	Jail	Sick- ness	Wid- ow	Or- phans	No. of Child- ren
American, . . .	9	4	...	1	...	4	...	26
Austro-Hungar'n,	25	8	2	2	2	9	2	75
German, . . .	146	37	3	13	8	83	2	467
English, . . .	8	2	1	1	1	3	...	24
Irish, . . .	12	1	2	1	2	6	...	38
Polish, . . .	101	25	1	13	16	41	5	335
Jewish, . . .	12	3	...	...	...	9	...	41
Italian, . . .	12	...	...	...	4	8	...	50
Other Nationalt's,	10	1	2	...	2	5	...	22
Totals, .	335	81	11	31	35	168	9	1,078

The total amount paid to the 335 families was \$28,475.58 —of which \$1,211.25 went to Italian families; 3.50 per cent of the families aided, and 4.25 per cent of the expense for aid.

These figures are eloquent of themselves, and do not need any comment; therefore we go on, to the most important chapter of our survey, Private Charities, and the Italians.

### XIII.

#### PRIVATE CHARITIES

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##### MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES AMONG ITALIANS

WE have secured information from fifteen Mutual Benefit Societies organized among the Italians of the Milwaukee colony, which help their members in case of sickness and their families in case of death of the breadwinner. There are no church societies in the colony organized for the purpose of looking after the poor, and all the 15 societies are of laical character, though several of them are called after the names of Saints of the Catholic Church. The following is the list of these societies:

- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Liberta' Siciliana.    | 9. Garibaldi.             |
| 2. Vespri Siciliani.      | 10. Naso-Capo d' Orlando. |
| 3. Cristoforo Colombo.    | 11. Trinacria.            |
| 4. Galileo Galilei.       | 12. Duca degli Abruzzi.   |
| 5. Vittorio Emanuele III. | 13. Tripoli Italiana.     |
| 6. San Giuseppe.          | 14. Fratellanza Toscana.  |
| 7. Madonna del Lume.      | 15. Madonna di Custonaci. |
| 8. Santa Croce.           |                           |

Generally the members of each of these societies are natives of the same Italian province, and in several cases of the same village or town, as is the case with "Santa Croce," whose members are from the Santo Stefano Camastra in Sicily. The number of members enrolled in each society runs from 50 to 150; therefore they do not give as large relief as they could if they had more members, or if all these societies were united in one federation. All of them are organized on the same plan, with a few differences in details. The staff consists of a large number of officials (12 or 14), who are in charge for one year,

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

and without salary, except the financial secretary, to whom is granted a small compensation for extraordinary services.

Relief is given by all these societies after the following manner:

1. **SICKNESS OF THE MEMBER:** This relief begins after three days of sickness and after previous examination and certificate from a doctor trusted by the same society. The relief is given in cash at the rate of \$1.00 per day for no longer time than three months. After that time, the relief is reduced one-half, to 50 cents daily for two or three months. After which, the relief is cut off entirely. In these cases almost all the Italian societies give to the sick member some money (\$20.00 or \$25.00), as an extraordinary contribution, and generally this money is not drawn from the treasury, but paid by members as a personal gift.
2. **DEATH OF THE MEMBER:** In such case the society pays all funeral expenses (from \$50 to \$90), and every member makes an extraordinary contribution of \$2.00 to the family of the dead member.

Furthermore, during the sickness of the member, all other members of the society are obliged to pay a visit to him and to give him assistance if there is no family to take care of him. In case of death all members are obliged to attend the funeral, under penalty for absence.

### RELIEF IS REFUSED

1. When disease was the consequence of crime or of wounds received in wrongful fighting;
2. In cases of venereal disease;
3. When the sick member did not pay his fees for three months regularly.

Fees paid by members are very small; they run from 30 cents to 60 cents monthly. Extraordinary contributions are

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

required in case of death or in case of exhaustion of the society's treasury. The average cost of the membership in these Italian societies in Milwaukee is from \$12.00 to \$15.00 a year.

Generally these societies have neither political nor religious character, though some of them celebrate every year a religious feast, like the Societies of Santa Croce and San Guiseppe. These feasts are very expensive for small societies, therefore, they collect money for such a purpose from the colony, to relieve the burden on the society's treasury. Other societies hold annual picnics or dancing parties, the expenses covered mostly by the receipts.

Besides the relief given by these organized societies, there are many other forms of relief for distressed families among Italians themselves. The most common is the collection of money among families of the neighborhood on behalf of some one in urgent distress, either from poverty or sickness. When the case is of one who does not belong to any society, a collection is made for the purpose of medical treatment or transportation to Italy. In many cases the sick one who benefits by the money has refused to go to a hospital and is in a sad condition in consequence. Money is quickly raised in prosperous times by a committee of three or four, but even in times of general poverty a contribution of a few cents is rarely refused.

Usually the spirit of mutual charity is well developed among poor Italians of the colony, and several visitors of charitable associations have found families dependent upon relief from such associations, giving help to some other family more destitute.

#### XIV.

### AMERICAN PRIVATE CHARITIES AMONG ITALIANS

#### A—"GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE REPORT OF THE IMMIGRANT COMMISSION"

THE Report of the Immigration Commission for the year 1910 published an investigation on "Immigrants as Charity Seekers." This study made by the Commission included the work done by charity organization societies in 43 big cities of the United States, during the six months from December, 1908, to May, 1909. It is very interesting to quote the figures given by that report concerning the Italians of the colony of Milwaukee, keeping them for comparison with the present status in the same colony.

The following is the general table of cases of all nationalities assisted in Milwaukee during the said period:

Nationality:	Native Born of Foreign Father	Foreign Born	Totals	Percentage of Foreign Nationalities
American native born of native father, . . . 48	...	...	48	.....
English, . . .	35	14	49	7.75
German, . . .	78	212	290	45.64
Irish, . . .	17	18	35	5.15
Polish, . . .	16	107	123	19.42
Italian, . . .	...	29	29	4.55
Others, . . .	16	46	62	9.93
Totals, . . .	162	426	636	.....

Among the 43 cities investigated, Milwaukee showed the highest proportion of foreign born cases (67%), and also the

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

highest proportion of cases among immigrants of the second generation (25.5%).

No case of this latter class (the second generation) was found among Italians, while they contributed 6% to the 426 cases of foreign born, and 4.55% of all the cases assisted by charities. The report, referring to the tables by nationalities of cases assisted, concludes as follows:

"It is seen that among the races where the head of the case was foreign born or native born of foreign father, the races ranking first, second and third, in the proportion of cases assisted within each geographical division, were as follows:

North Atlantic Division, . . .	1. Irish—Foreign born.
	2. Polish—Foreign born.
	3. German—Foreign born.
<hr/>	
North Central Division, . . .	1. German—Foreign born.
	2. Polish—Foreign born.
	3. German—Native born of German Father.
<hr/>	
Southern Division, . . .	1. German—Foreign born.
	2. German—Native born of German Father.
	3. Polish—Foreign born.
<hr/>	
Western Division, . . .	1. German—Foreign born.
	2. English—Foreign born.
	3. Irish—Native born of Irish Father."

Italians are not to be found in that table, in general, in the investigated cities they rank after the German, Polish, English, Irish, and Slav nationalities, in the proportion of cases.

1913—1,197,892, of which 265,542 were Italians.

1914—1,218,480, of which 283,738 were Italians.

The predominant racial element is now the same as in 1910, namely, of people of South Europe, with a large proportion of Slavs and Italians. On the other hand, the economic condition of the United States up to the close of 1914 was not unlike that of 1910; therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that even the general condition of the immigrants as charity



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seekers, must not be very different from what is shown in the report of 1910.

### B—GENERAL STATISTICS

This investigation includes the work done with Italians in Milwaukee, by the Associated Charities during the four years and three months from January 1, 1911, to March 31, 1915. The annual reports of the Association give the following figures, showing its activity in dealing with poor families of different races in Milwaukee:

Year:	New Cases	Old Cases	Total
1911, . . . . .	1,036	535	1,571
1912, . . . . .	871	854	1,725
1913, . . . . .	616	699	1,315
1914, . . . . .	1,194	779	1,973
1915—January-March, . . . .	941	1,030	1,971
Totals, . . . . .	4,658	3,897	8,555

Among the 4658 new records of Milwaukee families, we find 184 Italian families, distributed as follows:

1911	1912	1913	1914	1915 Jan.-Mch.	Total	Percentage
59	20	28	46	31	184	3.95

Of these 184 records, 44 are of no interest, because the Association did not work with the families, either in giving relief or in making an investigation. As these records do not give any data about the families, besides the name and address, and after a single interview at the office by the Registrar, or at the residence by a Visitor, no conclusion can be reached.

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The Italian families really assisted therefore, by the Associated Charities in the said period, are 140, to which 9 other cases reported from the year 1910 must be added, giving a total of 149 cases.

The Italian percentage is as follows:

Total Number of Cases:		Italian Cases	Italian Percentage
New Cases,	. . . . . 4,658	184	3.95
Old Cases,	. . . . . 3,897	92	2.37
Totals,	. . . . . 8,555	276	3.22

The present percentage is lower than that of 1910.

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## C—NATIVITY AND PROVINCE

The total number of cases in which information of the birthplace was secured is 149. The head of the family was foreign born in 147 cases, and only in two cases was native born, of Italian father (immigrant of the second generation).

The table which follows shows the cases assisted and the number of persons involved, by nativity and province of Italy in which they were born:

Italian Division:	Italian Province	Number of Cases	No. of Persons Involved	Percentage of	
				Cases	Persons
Sicily, . . .	Palermo	59	367	39.60	42.62
" . . .	Messina	47	285	31.54	33.10
" . . .	Girgenti	3	15	} 6.71	4.65
" . . .	Unknown	7	25		
South-Italy, .	Bari	2	10	} 10.74	9.64
" . . .	Foggia	2	12		
" . . .	Napoli	6	33		
" . . .	Salerno	1	8		
" . . .	Unknown	5	20		
Central-Italy,	Chieti	6	28	} 6.71	5.46
" . . .	Aquila	2	9		
" . . .	Firenze	1	5		
" . . .	Unknown	1	5		
North Italy, .	Venezia	2	7	} 3.36	3.83
" . . .	Genova	3	26		
Native Born of	Italian Father	2	6	1.34	0.70
Totals, . . .		149	861	100	100

The average number of persons in each family by geographical division is, in Sicily, 6; South Italy, 5.19; Central Italy, 4.70; North Italy, 6.60; American born, of Italian father, 3. It is to be noted that though generally families of North Italy have fewer children than families from South Italy, in this table North Italians rank first.

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

### D—CAUSES OF NEED

The classification of the apparent cause of need has been made under fourteen headings and the following table presents for each class of apparent causes of need the number of cases involved:

1. Death of breadwinner, . . . . .	14
2. Chronic disease of breadwinner, . . . . .	3
3. Death or illness of another member of family, . . . . .	42
4. Illness of breadwinner, . . . . .	43
5. Continuous unemployment, . . . . .	98
6. Partial unemployment, . . . . .	33
7. Insufficient earning for the large size of the family, . . . . .	13
8. Incarceration of breadwinner, . . . . .	4
9. Desertion by husband, . . . . .	3
10. Neglect by breadwinner, . . . . .	2
11. Poor housekeeping, . . . . .	18
12. Bad habits of breadwinner (laziness), . . . . .	2
13. Other, . . . . .	1

In several cases there are two or three related causes; the most common is the coincidence of unemployment and disease, either of the breadwinner or of another member of the family. That occurs in 72 cases.

The cause reported in the largest proportion of cases and involving the largest number of persons is **Lack of Employment**, total, or partial, with insufficient earnings.

The following table shows some details of this item:

Unemployment	For 1 or 2 Months	For 3 or 4 Months	For 5 Mos. and over	Total	Percentage on All Cases
Continuous Unemployment,	12	58	28	98	66.66
Partial Unemployment,	4	23	3	33	22.15
Total, .	16	94	31	121	81.21

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

Further interesting figures on Unemployment as a cause of distress are the following:

### UNEMPLOYMENT

As the Single Cause of Distress		In Concurrence with Other Causes	
Continuous	Partial	Continuous	Partial
36	13	62	20

In the 1910 report on "Immigrants as Charity Seekers" quoted above, the lack of employment as a cause of need is found in largest proportion among Syrian, English and Italian races, with the following percentage:

Syrian—Foreign born,	75.4%
English—Native born of English Father,	68.1%
Italian—Foreign born,	67.9%

The percentage of Milwaukee Italian cases is a little lower, but it is very high if we add all cases in which unemployment, either continuous or partial, is either a single or concurrent cause of need; such percentage being 81.21 per cent; namely, 121 cases of the total of 149.

The cause of need in the two families of native born of Italian father, in Milwaukee, is:

1. Neglect of the husband to provide for family needs;
2. Sickness of the wife.

It is worthy to be noted that no case is to be found in all these Italian records in which the distressing condition of the family is due to drunkenness or intemperance of the breadwinner, or to old age.

In the "Report of Immigrants as Charity Seekers," the races showing the largest proportion of cases, reporting the

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

bad habits and intemperance of the breadwinner as the cause of distress, are:

Polish—Native of foreign father, 34%.

Swedish—Native born of foreign father, 29.9%.

The Italians give the lowest figure of all races, their percentage being 0.7.

Old Age is to be found more often among the races ranking as follows:

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. French.   | 4. Irish.  |
| 2. Canadian. | 5. German. |
| 3. Welsh.    |            |

## AID GIVEN

The specific aid furnished by the Associated Charities in Milwaukee to the Italian families is shown in the following table, giving the proportion of cases assisted. Many cases were furnished with more than one kind of assistance and therefore appear under more than one heading.

1. Cash,	12
2. Clothing,	125
3. Employment or work secured,	8
4. Food or meals,	95
5. Fuel,	26
6. Lodging,	7
7. Medicine or medical assistance,	52
8. Rent,	8
9. Housekeeping (help or teaching),	44
10. Moral assistance,	12
11. Other,	14

The amount of material relief given, generally was small in each case, with the exception of 13 cases which needed greater assistance.

Among the families only three required steady assistance for three years or more, on account of chronic disease of the breadwinner of those families. In these cases the Associated Charities worked in co-operation with the Juvenile Court of

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee County, securing State Aid and supervising the budget of the families, giving further relief in food or cash as circumstances required.

In all other cases reported more than once, relief was given intermittently, as new distressing conditions obliged the families to call again for further aid. Very small is the number of cases in which work was secured, and almost all consisted in sewing or embroidery work for women, to be done at home.

In every case an employment card was given to the idle man, in co-operation with the Free Employment Bureau of the State, but very seldom with good results in the 1914 and 1915 period of unemployment. The giving of such cards, and obliging those men to go every day to the Bureau, to have their cards signed, was valuable only as a means of discovering whether men really wished to work.

Clothing is the larger part of the relief given, especially for children in winter time. The percentage of this form of aid is 62.7% of the total. About 60% of the clothes given were second hand, and in 4 cases was refused by the families. Food ranks second in importance and amount of the general relief, especially milk for babies or other members of families during sickness.

The Associated Charities works in co-operation with the County Department of Outdoor Relief, and generally sends those who need food to the County Department; but food also has been supplied directly by the Associated Charities in all urgent cases, and when the food given by the County Department was insufficient, on account of the size of the family, or because of illness of some of its members.

Very considerable is the work done in securing medical assistance, in co-operation with the hospitals, and free dispensaries, and other institutions of the city, like the Tuberculosis Department, Maternity Hospital, Visiting Nurses' Association, etc. The table which follows shows the number of Italians assisted:

1. Hospital care secured, free, . . . . .	15
2. Sent to Free Dispensaries, . . . . .	33

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

3. Assisted in co-operation with Tuberculosis Department, . . . . .	9
4. Assisted in co-operation with Maternity Hospital, . . . . .	16
5. Assisted in co-operation with Child Welfare Department, . . . . .	12
6. Medicine given, . . . . .	22

Only in a few exceptional cases was rent paid by the Associated Charities in behalf of Italian families, though most of them made application for it. In dealing with the Italians the Associated Charities office believes that rent, like other cash relief, ought to be avoided if possible, because this form of aid will result in pauperizing and in creating a very troublesome burden for the Association.

A very valuable work was done by the Visiting Housekeeper among Italians. In several cases the Housekeeper was sent to substitute for the mother of the family, especially in cases of confinement; in other cases she was sent to teach housekeeping to the families in which there was uncleanness and disorder, and to assist steadily until a sufficient standard of cleanliness was reached in the house. The housekeeper has been very useful also in teaching the cooking of American meals, and giving good suggestions for marketing, shopping, sewing, etc.

The Housekeeper visited 28 families, with an average of 6 visits to each family, and her work was very efficient in 15 cases, less efficient in 13.

Other relief in several cases was the furnishing of beds, ice boxes, and other small household utensils.

### F—TYPE OF CASES. PERSONS, AGE, CONJUGAL CONDITION

The number of persons involved in all Italian cases is shown in the table which follows:



# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

Families	With 1 Person	With 2 Persons	With 3 Persons	With 4 Persons	With 5 Persons	With 6 Persons	With 7 Persons	With 8 Persons	With 9 Persons	With 10 Persons	Total
Cases, . .	....	5	17	28	19	25	20	18	11	6	149
Persons, . .	....	10	51	112	95	150	140	144	99	60	861

# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

All these Italian cases can be classified under four groups and each can be termed a "type". The groups are:

1. Cases consisting of husband and wife with or without children;
2. Cases consisting of widow with or without children;
3. Cases consisting of widower with or without children;
4. Cases consisting of divorced or separated husbands or wives with or without children.

The number of cases of each type and the size of each family involved, is shown in the following table:

Type:	No Children	1 or 2 Children	3, 4 or 5 Children	6 or more Children	Total
First Group, .	3	36	57	30	126
Second Group, .	..	3	4	7	14
Third Group, .	..	1	1	..	2
Fourth Group, .	1	1	3	1	5
Both Parents Dead, .	..	..	..	1	1
Totals, .	4	41	65	39	149

The table which follows, shows all persons involved in the cases of Italians assisted, with the age grouping:

## AGE OF CHILDREN

Under 14	14 and over, Unmarried	14 and over, Married
502	52	28

## AGE OF PARENTS

20 and Under		From 21 to 39		From 40 to 59		60 and over		Unknown	
Men	Wom.	Men	Wom.	Men	Wom.	Men	Wom.	Men	Wom.
..	7	80	111	48	23	..	..	6	4

# THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

The 861 persons involved, are distributed as follows:

Children, . . . . .	582
Women, . . . . .	145
Men, . . . . .	134

## G—GENERAL OCCUPATION

The following table shows the occupation of the head of each family, in Italy first, and in America now:

	In Italy	In America
Agriculturists, . . . . .	98	..
Fishermen, . . . . .	18	..
Laborers, . . . . .	6	114
Peddlers, . . . . .	..	4
Garbage Collectors, . . . . .	..	2
Saloonkeepers, . . . . .	..	1
Grocers, . . . . .	..	1
Shoemakers, . . . . .	4	3
Carpenters, . . . . .	3	2
Tailors, . . . . .	1	1
Blacksmith, . . . . .	1	1
Sculptor in Plaster, . . . . .	1	1
Marble Cutter, . . . . .	1	1
Physically unfit, . . . . .	..	2
Unknown, . . . . .	1	1
Totals, . . . . .	134	134

The persons involved in all 149 cases investigated, are classified in three groups, as follows:

	At Work	At School	At Home	Totals
Children, . . . . .	23	321	238	582
Women, . . . . .	9	...	136	145
Men, . . . . .	132	...	2	134
Totals, . . . . .	164	321	376	861

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

### H—YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES

Among these Italian families assisted by charities, not one case is to be found with less than two years of residence in the United States. The table shows the specified number of years of residence of each family, both in the United States and in the City of Milwaukee:

#### IN THE UNITED STATES

From 2 to 3 Years	From 4 to 5 Years	From 5 to 10 Years	From 11 to 15 Years	More Than 15 Years
4	18	41	45	34

#### IN MILWAUKEE

Less Than 5 Years	5 Years and More	Unknown
47	95	7

The largest proportion of Italian cases is from those families who have lived in the United States 10 to 15 years. Among those who have lived here more than 15 years, the proportion of cases is also very considerable. In general it is evident that for the Italian families, the coming of distressing conditions does not immediately follow their arrival in America, but follows after 3 or 4 years of residence. In explanation of this, most of the Italian immigrants come to America alone; being single, they live upon a few cents daily, and though without work for months, they never fall to the charge of public charity; even if they do not find work as soon as they arrive, they do not starve, because they generally bring some money on which they live for several months. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1914, the Italian immigrants had at their arrival, money amounting to \$7,887.78 (figure given by the

"Report of Immigrant Commission Labor Dept., 1914); but as the same report observes, the true amount of money brought by Italians is really much more, because generally the Italian immigrants, suspicious as they are, do not show all the money they have with them.

After two or three years of hard work, those Italians who left wife and children in their native country, call them, and spend for that purpose all their savings. Afterwards, the care of wife and children makes living more expensive, and their savings are small accordingly. During long periods of no work, or of disease, they are obliged to call on charitable institutions, especially if, as very usually happens, the size of the family increases every year. In many cases of this kind the family's condition changes only after 14 or 15 years, when sons and daughters come to working age and help their parents. In other cases, when the size of the family is not too large, after several years of useless struggle, they become tired and go back to Italy. That explains the fact that among families with more than 15 years of residence in America, the percentage of charity cases decreases, also that among persons involved in such cases, very rarely is to be found any one over 55 or 60 years of age.

#### ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH AND CITIZENSHIP

When we know that the percentage of illiteracy is about 45% in the last statistics, and when we consider that the Sicilian immigrants in Milwaukee belong to the lower classes, we may suppose that the average of illiteracy will be about 50%. It is interesting to notice that illiteracy is prevalent among immigrants, older than 25 years, and among men more than among women. Compulsory education in South Italy is becoming efficacious and in a few years illiteracy will disappear entirely from Sicily as it did from North Italy.

Detailed references are found in the Associated Charities records about the ability to speak English in investigated families. The table which follows, shows the proportion of families in which one or both parents born in Italy were speaking English.

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

Under the heading "Speaking English" are grouped those who have a knowledge of the English language limited to their practical needs, but enough to permit investigation, without an interpreter. Under "Little English" are grouped those who know some English words, but where an interpreter was necessary to deal with them:

Speak English, . . . . .	29
Little English, . . . . .	32
No English, . . . . .	86
Native born, . . . . .	2
<hr/>	
Total, . . . . .	149

Data relative to Citizenship is found only in a few cases, and their number is very small in comparison with the total number of families dealt with. Only in 14 cases is it noted that the head of the family had both papers of naturalization; in 12 cases only the first papers were obtained, in all other cases no information is given.

It is remarkable that in three cases the head of the family who had obtained his naturalization paper and full citizenship of the United States, confessed himself to be entirely illiterate.

## APPENDIX

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### ITALIANS ON FARMS

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#### FARM HAND IN THE OLD COUNTRY

FARMING in Sicily is conducted on a very different basis than in America. There the large land owner (feudi or tenuta) or renter, gives out his land to the poor people to be cultivated on shares. Usually he pays the taxes, furnishes seeds and stock, and sometimes groceries and wine to the workmen and takes as his share half of the crops and all the by-products. The dairying and poultry department is operated by special employes for the profit of the owner. Varying according to the size of the tract, many hundred people are employed on each "feudo or tenuta," each one of them working on a tract of land set aside for him and his family. Generally there is only a large building or aggregation of buildings on these lands. There the land owner or renter has his office, there are the crop stores, the stables and the dairy and poultry departments.

The workingmen sleep in these buildings during the winter time, when the work is going on, as the village where they have their families and homes usually is too far away to permit them to come and go every day. In this case they return to the town every Saturday night, and Monday morning they go back to their work. During the harvesting and summer time they take their wives and children along and often sleep under tent on the piece of land they have been working.

On the other hand, the small land owner, whose land is always within walking distance from towns and villages, cultivates the land himself and lives in the town, or if he is a well-to-do citizen, he gets his help by day or by week, and pays for it by day or by week. There is not such a thing in the interior of

## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

South Italy and Sicily as a farm hand living with the farmer's family, sharing his home and meals; and, as my personal knowledge and experience has taught me, the few Italians employed by American farmers appreciate this difference in treatment and in consequence are greatly affected by it, to their moral and physical betterment. The only thing they object to, especially on starting, are the American meals, but I have yet to encounter one who left his place for this reason alone.

## ITALIAN AND AMERICAN FARMING

A large number of young Italians are willing to take up farm work, especially in hard times, when there is very little work in factories. Last year in a few weeks campaign I had many hundreds of applications for farm work from Milwaukee and nearby colonies. I placed many of them and from the letters received from the farmers, I have concluded that the results could not be better. I placed them on a contract of three months, but many of them are working up to today in the same places and they write that they do not wish to come back.

I had an advertisement running for four weeks in the "Wisconsin Agriculturist," and received hundreds of applications from farmers.

The number of applications received, shows plainly that the prejudice against Italians on the part of American farmers is exaggerated. They were glad to get Italian help and in many cases treat them as members of the family.

I think the best result can be obtained from married couples with children; the only objection being the number of children. Usually when a farmer wants a married couple, he wants them without children, or with not more than one or two children. The average Italian families have five or six children.

## COLONIZATION

The unimproved land of North Wisconsin should be a very good region in which to place settlers. The Cumberland colony



## THE ITALIANS IN MILWAUKEE

is an example of a successful Italian settlement. The South Italians are especially adapted to country life and they would be willing to start their life in this country on farms if the way were made clear for them. Small farms or truck gardens near good markets are their specialty.

There are many things necessary to bring about a proper colonization of Italian farmers. First of all is financial aid, and then an appreciation and thorough understanding of the merits and the faults of this people.

A practical scheme is the following:

1. Set aside 1,000 acres of land near a good market; divide the land in 40 acre tracts; build on each a small house and a small barn (a log house would do), place one family in each house, furnishing them with two horses, two or more cows, a few pigs, and chickens. Receive from each family \$100 or more, if they have it, as a cash payment, and give them credit for groceries in a nearby general store.
2. In subsequent years half of the crops would go to pay for the land and stock furnished; the other half to be left to the farmers, to dispose of for their needs, and so on, until the price of the land and interest are paid.



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



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